

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

☒ New Submission ☐ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

The Civilizing of a Midwestern City: The Park and Boulevard System of Fort Wayne, Indiana--A Plan for the Ideal Development of Transportation, Parks and Residential Subdivisions.

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Historic Context #1: Moving People and Goods-----	Transportation Resources	Allen County, Indiana	(1600-1955)
Historic Context #2: The Green Lungs of the City---	Park Resources	Fort Wayne, Indiana	(1850-1955)
Historic Context #3: A Better Place to Live-----	Residential Development	Fort Wayne, Indiana	(1880-1955)
Historic Context #4: A Time to Play-----	Recreation Resources	Fort Wayne, Indiana	(1865-1955)

C. Form Prepared by

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city or town Fort Wayne state IN zip code 46802

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature and title of certifying official

Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

Date

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

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## Introduction

### The Concept of the City Beautiful

In *The City Beautiful Movement* William H. Wilson explained that the “heyday of the City Beautiful movement, from about 1900 to 1910, saw middle- and upper-middle-class Americans attempt to refashion their cities into beautiful, functional entities. Their effort involved a cultural agenda, middle-class environmentalism, and aesthetics expressed as beauty, order, system, and harmony.” The “ideal found physical realization” in the design and construction of parks, parkways and boulevards, civic centers, public buildings, subdivisions, street trees, light poles, and bridges. Wilson continued that the “goal beyond the tangibles was to influence the heart, mind, and purse, of the individual. Physical change and institutional reform would persuade urban dwellers to become more imbued with civic patriotism and better disposed toward community needs. Beautiful surroundings would enhance worker productivity and urban economics.”<sup>1</sup> Baas and Jones, however, suggest that the concepts of City Beautiful---the goal of an Ideal City---extended to the period after World War II when the suburb rather than the city center became the focus of home life. This broadening of the City Beautiful time period is based on the continued writing, publication and popularity of its visionary Charles Mulford Robinson’s books (his last book was published in 1918, a year after his death), the impact of the Great Depression and the continued efforts at improving cities and towns by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and Civil Works Administration (CWA) in the 1930s. Moreover, many of the guidelines for the Ideal City are being reconsidered as applicable in the modern city cultural landscape.

Beginning about 1907, the citizens of Fort Wayne, through the leadership of local civic improvement groups, combined their efforts with the local government to implement plans to “beautify” their city. The first plan was submitted with great fanfare by Rochester, New York’s Charles Mulford Robinson in 1909. It addressed the city’s *appearance*---an ugly, unplanned, growing, and industrialized landscape---and offered plans for the improvement to the city center, business and residential streets, parks, and transportation ways. It was followed by a park and boulevard plan by landscape architect George Kessler in 1911. Kessler proposed, in essence, the City Beautiful plan for establishing Fort Wayne as a *modern, civic world-class* city. His plan is entitled the Park and Boulevard System for Fort Wayne, Indiana. The key word being system, where the major transportation thoroughfares have already been established and on that skeleton he has placed a transportation framework to connect people to natural features, their associated park expansions and enhancements, the central business district, and present and future residential districts. The proposed system, encompassing the city, united the three rivers and the built city into a unified entity. The plan highlighted and capitalized on the city’s most important and significant asset, its three rivers and the opportunity they presented for

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<sup>1</sup> William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, page 1

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transportation, recreation, and the healthful benefits provided by nature. The rivers were and are the foundation for Fort Wayne's existence and unique identity. The plan also acknowledged that Fort Wayne was a growing metropolis, so it included broad and long boulevards that encircled and connected the three districts of the city---residential, business and industrial---to facilitate population growth, commercial and industrial expansion. As with any system, its functionality depends on components, where the sum of these parts provides more than each working separately. When a component is missing, there is no system.

### City Beautiful Forces

Several forces, or defining ideals, shaped the city beautiful ideal throughout the United States: democracy, hygiene, identity, population growth, industrialization, conservation, and the grass roots promotion of the movement by local civic groups. In the early 20th century these same issues were shaping Fort Wayne. Several grassroots civic groups promoted Fort Wayne beautification. In 1909 the Commercial Club "took action along all lines of civic betterment," with special attention to "the matters of parks, and the river purification and beautification." Private donations partly financed University of Chicago Sociology Professor Charles Zueblin's visit to the city, as well as the Robinson plan. Theodore F. Thieme, Fort Wayne leader and industrialist, funded a river overlook and drive "at his personal expense, as an example of river beautification." As a result of floods in 1913, the River Improvement Association was formed to review options for control and prevention of floods. These associations and private citizens worked with local governmental entities such as the Board of Park Commissioners and the River Front Commission, the latter hiring Kessler "to supervise the great work of revising the park system and beautifying the river banks."<sup>2</sup>

### The Ideal: Modern Civic Art

The forces that shaped the era known as the City Beautiful were combining to shape the identity of not only the United States, but also its developing cities and towns that aspired to be world-class. More than agrarian, more than functional, the cities and towns were to develop as cultured and educated and be identified by their own unique character. That is, its natural features and demographics combining to produce a unique cultural landscape. The perceived 'Ideal' city addressed tenets of *modern* (scientific and comprehensive) *civic* (democratic and philanthropic) *art* (educated citizens, elevation of beautiful as a successor to merely functional).

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<sup>2</sup> B. J. Griswold, *Guide to Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1913 pages 29-31

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The Merriam –Webster Dictionary defines *Civilize* as “to bring to a technically advanced and rationally ordered stage of cultural development.” This definition supports the title of this Multiple Property Cover Document, in that the Kessler Park and Boulevard System integrates transportation, park, recreation and natural resources in combination with residential development, to civilize a Midwestern city.

### The People

Several noted persons, singularly or as part of design firms, created Fort Wayne’s 20th century renaissance. The first was Charles Mulford Robinson (1869-1917) who presented a beautification plan to the city in 1909. Robinson was from Rochester, New York and covered the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 as a journalist. He was so inspired by the possibilities of city reform that were presented by the event that he took it upon himself to educate the public. He authored a series of books and articles; in 1901 he wrote *The Improvement of Towns and Cities, or the Practical Basis of City Aesthetics*, and in 1903 *Modern Civic Art, or the City Made Beautiful*. Although Robinson had to self-fund *Improvement*, it became a bestseller and went through eleven printings in fifteen years.<sup>3</sup> Its success inspired the writing of *Modern Civic Art*, which gave birth to the catch-phrase used to identify his ideals---City Beautiful. Fort Wayne newspapers referred to Robinson as a “civic improvement expert,” and the more fawning “apostle of beauty.”<sup>4</sup>

Robinson’s significant contribution to the development of civilized cities and towns at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was in providing a vision of the ideal, and in promoting his ideas in books and speaking engagements throughout the country. His books provide a blueprint for any citizen, grassroots organization, or local government to build or aspire to build an ideal city or town.

George Kessler, landscape architect, originally from Germany, combined his education in botany, forestry, design and civil engineering to define the uniquely American park and boulevard system. With over 230 known projects, including plans for 26 communities and the same number of park and boulevard systems,<sup>5</sup> Kessler defined City Beautiful. Based on his German background and education,

city planning was a ‘fine art and a technical science,’ planned with deliberate and conscious determination. Kessler skillfully manipulated the resources to serve many functions at one time. Open spaces were more than just green; roads were more than automobile thoroughfares; and water was more than a natural feature. In so

<sup>3</sup> Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land*, page 414

<sup>4</sup> *The Fort Wayne News*, September 22, 1909 and *Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette*, September 29, 1909

<sup>5</sup> www.georgekessler.org

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doing, the engineered function of a resource was always overlain with an artful hand that used quality of life in human context as the key design criteria.<sup>6</sup>

The city of Fort Wayne hired Bennett, Parsons and Frost, of Chicago, in 1927 as Consulting Architects to the city. The contract included the production of the *Plan of Street, Road and Public Space Improvements*, and the *Zoning Plan* for the city. Their work was the next layer of development of Kessler's designed plan for the city. Prior to his establishment of his own firm, Edward H. Bennett, architect, was employed by Daniel Burnham and partnered with him in the development of the 1906-1909 Plan of Chicago---the first metropolitan regional plan in the United States. The nationally known architecture and engineering firm's commissions ranged from City Plans for Detroit, Minneapolis, Palm Beach, and Buffalo, to the design of Buckingham Fountain in Grant Park, Chicago and the William Wrigley, Jr. Memorial Tower in Santa Catalina, CA. Other work included, among others, the Zoning Ordinances for Pasadena, and Lake Forest, IL, bridge design such as the Michigan Avenue Bridge in Chicago, and the Panama-Pacific International Exposition site plan in San Francisco, CA. Locally, in Vincennes, Indiana, Bennett, Parsons and Frost (BPF) were hired as competition advisors for the design of the George Rogers Clark Memorial and designers of the grounds and Lincoln Memorial Bridge in the period 1928-1935. William E. Parsons served as the Consulting Architect for that commission.<sup>7</sup>

It should be noted that additional Progressive leaders, landscape architects, and architects contributed to the development of the system components. Sociologist Charles Zueblin (1866-1924), who authored books similar to Robinson's in content, presented a series of lectures in 1909. In addition, civic improvement proponent Horace McFarland (1859-1948) presented a report to the city in 1912 that encouraged their beautification efforts. Arthur Shurtleff (Shurcliff) designed some residential subdivisions, developed the plan of improvement for Swinney Park and the master plan of Shoaff Park. Lawrence Sheridan, designed Indian Village, a significant residential subdivision (and extended the Kessler Indianapolis Plan to the Marion county limits). Other architects or landscape architects include: John Chislett, Sr., designer of Lindenwood Cemetery (1860), John Doswell who designed the first plan of the park system in 1888; Henry J. Doswell, his son, who designed the master plan for Lakeside Park, c.1912; Adolph Jaenicke, who designed the Lakeside Sunken Garden, the Japanese Garden at Swinney Park and is thought to have designed the Sunken Garden at Lindenwood Cemetery; and Charles Weatherhogg, the architect for Northside High School located on the east riverbank of the St. Joseph River along State Boulevard.<sup>8</sup> The location of Northside High School, in particular, is a significant example of City Beautiful tenets, in that it places a public educational institution, designed in

<sup>6</sup> The Indianapolis Park and Boulevard System National Register Nomination Form, Section 8, page 4

<sup>7</sup> Christina P. Jones, *The Cultural Landscape Report for George Rogers Clark National Historical Park*, page 339

<sup>8</sup> ARCH, Inc. [www.archfw.org](http://www.archfw.org)

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classical architectural style, along an important natural feature---the St. Joseph River with access by the ‘grand’ State Boulevard---melding *modern* and *civic* with *art* to exemplify a unified plan.

### The Composition

Landscape architect John Nolen explained that city planning “is the attempt to exert well-considered control on behalf of the people of a city over the development of their physical development as a whole.” American planning had European precedents in France, Germany, and England.

France’s influence reaches back to seventeenth and eighteenth century Baroque Era Paris where the city was designed “as a series of monumental episodes, which gradually came together to form a coherent, systematic structure.” Various monarchs constructed monumental palaces, squares, and boulevards that “created a new open relationship to the environment” that were mimicked throughout Europe.<sup>9</sup> The Paris Universal Exposition of 1889 was another influence on American city planning as an inspiration for the Columbian Exposition of 1893 discussed below. The Paris event utilized “axiality, formality, naturalistic constructionism” to combine for the “romantic appeal of neoclassical architecture” and the “romantic yearnings” of nature, and set the benchmarks that architect and planner Daniel Burnham would strive to exceed on the shores of Lake Michigan.<sup>10</sup>

Germany was generally regarded as the world leader in city planning. Nolen described its “scientific basis and painstaking thoroughness,” and Frederic C. Howe wrote that German planners “treat the land on which it is built as a whole.” Cornell professor Emeritus, John W. Reps described how Americans learned of German city planning from professional journal and magazine articles, and that Germany “led the world in their municipal regulations that combined the fixing of street lines and how land could be used.”<sup>11</sup> In 1907, the Incorporated Society of Architects and Engineers of Germany modified and expanded earlier principles that Reps explained reflected “the early emergence of city planning as an accepted responsibility of German cities and the widespread preparation and adoption of urban expansion and redevelopment plans and programs.” The document stated that in planning cities “esthetic (sic), hygienic, social and economic principles should be considered individually and in combination. The aesthetic principles include the architectonic treatment of space, landscape treatment to attain vista effects, and more especially

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<sup>9</sup> Christian Norberg-Schultz, *Meaning in Western Architecture*, page 150

<sup>10</sup> William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, page 90

<sup>11</sup> John Nolen, ‘The Basis of German City Planning Procedure,’ *Landscape Architecture* 2 (October 1911), formatted as a web document by John W. Reps.

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regard for the preservation of monuments and maintenance of features of local and national interest.”<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, F. Brinkmann, writing from Berlin in 1910, discussed how the population of German cities, much like Fort Wayne, expanded with industrialization, and that “the rush from the open country was so often great and sudden” that a “new science” had developed “that is the art of municipal architecture.” Brinkmann continued that growth by “concentric rings” was harmful to the economical, political, and traffic development of the city, and must be replaced by a radial system of “rays instead of rings.” The division of a city into “wedge like portions, the main thoroughfares being straight, long, and wide” was exemplified in the capital Berlin, and in Dusseldorf.<sup>13</sup>

England’s most notable contribution to American city planning was Ebenezer Howard’s 1898 *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*. The book described a model city that “married” the advantages of the town and the country. The town, named Garden City, would have ample and planned transportation, a limited population and size, land held in trust for its citizens, “spaciousness,” and areas for industry, commerce, government, and housing. Cities based on Howard’s ideals were constructed almost immediately in England (Bournville and Letchworth), and in America (Radburn, New Jersey) in the 1920s.<sup>14</sup>

Professor David Schuyler wrote that the form of American cities was redefined in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as more thought was given to the creation of parks, suburbs, and subdivisions “in anticipation of the expansion of the gridiron.” Schuyler points to Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux’s naturalistic plan for Central Park (that had English and German precedents in form and ideals) as an example of how nature, as the restorer of the being, was incorporated into the design of the city. The park was designed as a respite from the city’s degrading slums, and its 800 acres offered health, therapy and tranquility. In 1868, Olmsted and Vaux transferred these ideals to Riverside, a Chicago naturalistic suburb designed to be domestic, refined and civilized.<sup>15</sup>

The World’s Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893, was considered the genesis for the City Beautiful. Known as the White City, the event was designed by Daniel Burnham and Frederick Law Olmsted as the epitome of what a city could be. The electrified event presented monumental neoclassical buildings, broad streets and walks, efficient transportation, and design unity and harmony. It was visited by millions of Americans, and surely by

12 Incorporated Society of Architects and Engineers of Germany, Planning Towns and Cities, *Municipal Journal* and *Engineer* 22 (March 1907); and Frederic C. Howe, The City as a Socializing Agency, *American Journal of Sociology* 17 March 1912), formatted as a web document by John W. Reps.

13 F. Brinkmann, Modern City Planning, *Municipal Engineering* 31 (October 1910), formatted as a web document by John W. Reps.

14 Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land*, page 453

15 Davis Schuyler, *The New Urban Landscape*, page 163

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hundreds from Fort Wayne. Design professionals, and others like Robinson, were inspired to carry its themes and ideals back to their home cities. Charles Zueblin believed that it was “a miniature of the ideal city” and “a prophecy of what we could do.”<sup>16</sup>

At a 1909 banquet of retail merchants, the Fort Wayne Postmaster and Commercial Club Secretary Robert Hanna, presented the first argument for a river boulevard system. The *Fort Wayne News* reported that he “devoted himself to a discussion of a great scheme of boulevards, bordering the Fort Wayne rivers, and spoke with telling clearness of the propriety and possibility of the establishment of a system of roadways which would be of lasting benefit to the city.”<sup>17</sup>

In Hanna’s ‘response to the toast’ he explained,

The Saints of Fort Wayne? I know of only two Saints who came to Fort Wayne before I came here, and I know of none who have come since. These two Saints came here---one from the North and one from the South---over the cleanest highways ever traveled. Upon their arrival they slept in the cleanest beds ever made. They were loved and respected by the [Indian] tribes, who then ruled these parts. Under [Indian] rule, these two saints lived a pure life. But after awhile civilization came and cultured gentlemen took the place of the [Indian]. Among these men were hard headed (but short sighted) business men who insisted that all things should be made to do their bidding, and so it happened that the beautiful Saint Joseph and the beautiful Saint Mary were made to do the dirty work of the city scavenger. True it is that the front door of the house of our forefathers opened upon the banks of these beautiful rivers, but they soon turned their backs upon them and the banks of the Saint Joseph and Saint Mary’s rivers have constituted the back yard of Fort Wayne ever since, and such a backyard no [Indian] ever lived. My suggestion is that we tear down the back fence, build a drive way along the banks of these rivers, turn the searchlight of public observation upon them and flowers will then bloom where the slop bucket now hangs.<sup>18</sup>

In August of 1910, after Zueblin’s lectures, and about the time of the publication and public release of the Robinson plan (almost a year after its completion), a rally was held in the interest of city beautification. The *Fort Wayne Daily News* wrote,

A grand success are the words that truly describe the great mass meeting that was held last night at Swinney

<sup>16</sup> Charles Zueblin, *A Decade of Civic Development* (Chicago: 1905), formatted as a web document by John W. Reps.

<sup>17</sup> The Fort Wayne News, ‘Postmaster Hanna’s Suggestion for Extensive River Boulevard System, February 2, 1909

<sup>18</sup> The Fort Wayne News, ‘Postmaster Hanna’s Suggestion for Extensive River Boulevard System, February 2, 1909

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Park in the interests of civic improvement. The enthusiasm and attendance were far in excess of expectations and if anything was ever demonstrated in Fort Wayne, it was last night that the people are intensely interested in this problem of a better and more beautiful city.<sup>19</sup>

Multiple speeches presented by local leaders reinforced the City Beautiful rhetoric of Robinson and Zueblin. For instance, it was reported that Civic Improvement Association President, C. H. Worden “has made a thorough study of civic beautification problems, not only as they present themselves, in this country, but as they have been met and solved in European countries. He described [to the audience] the wonderful things that have been done in the cities of Europe, and then turned toward home and told of what has been done right here in the United States.” And, Robert Hanna explained that beautification “was an investment. It increases the value, it works wonders for the happiness and health of the people and develops in the citizens a pride for their city that nothing else could command.”<sup>20</sup>

Also in August of 1910, forty “civic enthusiasts” visited Indianapolis as guests of the local Commercial Club. The group reviewed the city’s riverbank beautification work, and “took away with them many ideas that will be valuable to them in regard to city beautification, and Fort Wayne could not help from profiting from the trip.”<sup>21</sup> Dr. Henry Jamison, president of the Indianapolis Board of Park Commissioners, explained that Fort Wayne’s citizens should be aware “that the cost of carrying out your plans of river improvement is not to be born by the present generation alone, but succeeding generations should bear their share.” He also encouraged them to “start right, have a definite purpose in view. Remember that every dollar invested will add ten dollars to your realty, and above all keep everlasting at it and success will be yours.”<sup>22</sup>

By invitation of the Commercial Club, George Kessler visited Fort Wayne on September 10, 1910 to help promote a bond issue to fund purchase of the riverbanks. Kessler told the members that they had the “opportunity of creating the finest city in the country,” and that other cities “would be willing to spend vast sums of money to secure what you already possess: three large streams radiating to every part of your city from a central point.” He continued that “a pleasant water surface is an absolute essential to every park scheme, and you can have almost unlimited water surface.” He pushed the members to “purchase every foot of the river banks on both sides and then proceed as you have started with a well defined plan.”<sup>23</sup> Fort Wayne taxpayers were asked to support a bond of 4 ¼% on each assessed \$100 for

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19 The Fort Wayne Daily News, ‘City Beautification,’ August 11, 1910

20 The Fort Wayne Daily News, ‘City Beautification,’ August 11, 1910

21 The Fort Wayne News, ‘Are at Indianapolis,’ August 25, 1910

22 The Fort Wayne News, ‘Good Advice From Indianapolis,’ August 27, 1910

23 The Fort Wayne News, ‘Another Expert Gives Good Advice,’ September 13, 1910

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civic beautification. A September 1910 Bert Griswold cartoon promoted the bond's benefits, which included an increased notice from abroad, increased real estate values, improved sanitation, more attractive parks, and "getting back to nature."<sup>24</sup>

In October of 1910, a year following its completion, 3,000 bound copies of Robinson's plan were shared with the public. The *Journal-Gazette* reported:

What may be considered easily the most beautiful book ever issued by any society for exploiting of the virtues and possibilities of a city is that which will come from the press of the Fort Wayne Printing Company early this week under the auspices of the Fort Wayne Civic Improvement Association, the outgrowth of civic revival of a year and a half ago---Charles Mulford Robinson's report on the beautification of Fort Wayne."

The paper continued that,

Mr. Robinson has evolved first of all a beautiful whole. He has put himself in sympathy with the city, its development, its people, and its possibilities. He has built on these possibilities. Thus, he has taken up each department of improvement separately and worked out solutions which are practical or impractical, as you choose.

And, that the plan

may be called the crowning result of the civic improvement idea which has been growing and waxing stronger and stronger during the last four years. It is not a thing of the present alone; it is built on the past and built for the future.

The *Gazette* concluded that,

Conditions in Fort Wayne are especially an inducement for river drives and a system of boulevards. For a drive and walk along the river, that is a parking of a strip of riverbank, would connect the three principal parks, Swinney, Lawton, and Lakeside. Secondly, the parking of a strip of riverbank would, if carried far enough, bring park acreage and park entrance close to a long stretch of the city---from its southwest corner just above

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<sup>24</sup> The Fort Wayne News, September 23, 1910

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Broadway bridge to the northeast corner of Walton Avenue bridge, a band of green, in realization of that parkway ideal which is such a feature of modern European planning.<sup>25</sup>

By June of the following year, ward and neighborhood level improvement associations were lobbying for improvements. For instance, it was reported that, "the largest park in the city," or what would become Foster Park "is being proposed by the southside section of the Fort Wayne civic improvement association." The park is "a particularly beautiful section, and could easily be converted into one of the most attractive and delightful resorts in the city. It is also proposed by the southsiders to have a boulevard constructed along the river bank, as the scenery there is notably beautiful."<sup>26</sup> Similar promotion, lobbying, and demands were made by citizens, civic leaders, and politicians for parks throughout the city.

It is in this great rush of enthusiasm that the Board of Park Commissioners engaged George Kessler for a plan to improve the river banks, parks, and transportation structure of the city. Kessler's plan is the culmination of a series of events initiated, developed, and promoted by local citizenry. It embodies more than sixty years of design evolution that in America begins with Olmsted and Vaux, was presented as moral responsibility by Zueblin and McFarland, defined for popular consumption by Robinson, and made real by Kessler.

### The Scope of This Multiple Property Cover Document

This multiple property cover document addresses four historic contexts related to the civilizing of Fort Wayne: Transportation Resources, Park Resources, Residential Development, and Recreation Resources. The prevailing context that influenced the above four was the City Beautiful movement and Fort Wayne's attempt to become a civilized 'world-class' city in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Transportation Resources as an historic context were identified because the ability to freely move is a defining example of democratic freedom---a city beautiful tenet. It also enables free enterprise, another example of democracy in action. Its many layers of transportation resources combined with its development as a trade and industrial center literally put the city on the map. Park resources were developed as an historic context because they identify the unique natural features of the city environs as a component rather than foe of the city's cultural development. The natural features combine with the existing transportation resources to provide the foundation for the proposed Ideal Plan for the growth and development of the city; the residential districts would follow. Residential development defines a quality of life that advances civilization from mere survival. Moreover, a

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<sup>25</sup> Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, 'Building An Ideal city with Fort Wayne as Raw Material,' October 16, 1910

<sup>26</sup> The Fort Wayne News, 'South Side Wants the Largest Park in the City,' June 17, 1911

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proposed result of the Ideal Plan was high-quality residential subdivisions, which then elevated local property values, and therefore the stature of Fort Wayne among other cities. The last historic context identified here is the Recreation Resources, in particular park-type, because without them, the work force and associated families in the city could not function, creating a less than ideal city. Research for this document revealed an overriding significance and importance of transportation and industry to the development of Fort Wayne as a city. Time limits and the specific scope of this project---to provide a context for the Fort Wayne park and boulevard system---prevented the complete documentation of transportation resources and no documentation of the impact of industry on the development of the city. Furthermore, it was discovered that the ethnic German and English influences provided their own push-pull in the city, and a very strong grassroots volunteerism and philanthropy moved the city forward when the government could not. It is recommended that these additional historic contexts and associated property types be added to this document to provide a complete understanding of the national significance of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Unbeknownst to the authors at the inception of this study, and perhaps some of the readers of this document, the significance of Fort Wayne began almost 1.5 billion years ago---much earlier than ever anticipated. Therefore, the establishment of periods of significance provided an interesting challenge. It was decided, however to end each period of significance in 1955, the fifty year limit for significance. Because the focus of this document is the development of the park and boulevard system, all periods of significance, with the exception of the Transportation Resources, begin in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, the extraordinary length of the period of history and pre-history before the focus of this document provides a multitude of opportunities for multi-disciplinary studies in the development of one of the most significantly unique cities in the country.

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## Historic Context #1: Moving People and Goods—Transportation Resources

### Introduction

Location, location, location has been the reason for Fort Wayne's importance and significance for conceivably at least 10,000 years. Moreover, it is because of the three rivers here that man has moved through or stayed in 'Fort Wayne' in all of those years. Beginning with hunter-gatherers who roamed the area, to pioneers and then immigrants who both passed through on their way to the 'West,' or those who stayed to dwell, earn a living and raise a family; Fort Wayne has been a key component in the development of the transportation system for the interior of the continent. As a convenient center in the transportation network that eventually connected the entire country, for over 400 years Fort Wayne has grown and developed via the evolution of the prevailing mode of transportation. The riverways, early traces and pikes, evolved into the canal and planked overland roads. When the canal could not sustain economic development, the industrial revolution entered with the railroad lines, using the old canal way for some of its corridors. The residents of Fort Wayne used the rapid-transit system of electric rail lines to connect and move about within town and state, improving on the horse and buggy and the bicycle. The invention of the automobile, coupled with a desire to be a world-class city, was an impetus for developing the transportation framework that led to the proposed design of the modern city of Fort Wayne in the early 1900s. Moreover, with this development has come the civilizing of the city with improvements in the quality of life of its residents and visitors---improvements in where they live, work and play. The realization of this Multiple Property Cover Document, almost 100 years later, again examining the 'City Beautiful' ideal with its comprehensive city-wide hierarchal network of thoroughfares, boulevards, residential streets, parkways and associated parks and residential development, has brought Fort Wayne full circle, in its attempts to once again connect itself to its rivers; its past, and future.

### Geographical Context

First, there was the land, air and water; and the uniqueness of Fort Wayne, Indiana began to develop 1.5 to 1 billion years ago. At that time, the basement layer of the exposed bedrock in present day Indiana included two crescent-shaped arches and two basins. The arches, known as the Cincinnati and Kankakee, extended from southeastern Indiana and northern Kentucky (Cincinnati), to northwestern Indiana and northern Illinois (Kankakee). Precipitation and eroding rocks drained into the two basins. The Michigan Basin, located in the center of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, collected water and sediment from the eastern side of the two arches. The Illinois Basin, located predominantly at the confluence of the present day Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, collected from the western side of the

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two arches.<sup>27</sup> The tectonic North American Plate, on which Fort Wayne was located generally near its center, was near the equator and included “quiet marine and river waters” and “a large shallow sea.”<sup>28</sup> This tropical environment and the movement of the North American Plate led to the build up of reefs and the deposition of marine life sediments that formed Indiana’s world renown limestone.<sup>29</sup>

In the Paleozoic Era, 570-245 million years ago (MYA), the seas continued to advance and recede. One notable build up of the reefs is “an extensive carbonate bank” that is “well-exposed in quarries near Fort Wayne.”<sup>30</sup> Approximately 320 MYA, in the Mississippian Period, the location of Indiana was uplifted and tilted, draining and eroding southwesterly.<sup>31</sup> After the Pennsylvanian Period, approximately 286 MYA, Indiana was again tilted and eroded. This tilt, thought to be caused by a plate convergence along the eastern edge of North America, folded the Appalachian Mountains and caused the Pennsylvanian era rocks to dip toward the Michigan and Illinois basins.<sup>32</sup>

At the end of the Age of Dinosaurs, around 65 million years ago, terrestrial climates began to cool slightly. The ensuing Great Ice Age, lasting from approximately 2-3 MYA to 10,000 years ago, covered more than two thirds of the state with glacial deposits from the advancing and retreating of four different glaciers. The last glacier, the Wisconsin Drift, formed two lobes as it receded from Indiana to northeastern Canada, its origin. The western lobe (Lake Michigan Lobe) advanced and receded forming present day Lake Michigan from Glacial Lake Chicago. The eastern lobe (The Ontario-Erie Lobe) extended from present-day Lake Erie, drifting southwesterly toward and past Fort Wayne, Indiana. This advancing, receding and melting glacier formed Glacial Lake Maumee, with drainage *southwesterly* to the Glacial Wabash River.<sup>33</sup> As Lake Erie was forming from the receding Wisconsin glacier, there were spans of “high water stands” with periodic flooding. The flooding extended to New Haven, east of Fort Wayne, Indiana.<sup>34</sup>

The glaciers shaped the landforms in two ways; first with the movement of its waters, creating river valleys and their associated rivers, streams, runs, and wetlands, secondly, with the deposition of sediments in what are now identified as moraines. As the Wisconsin glacier receded in northeastern Indiana, it left its deposits of earth and stone in a series of

27 Rupp, <http://igs.indiana.edu>

28 Rupp, <http://igs.indiana.edu>

29 Marion T. Jackson, *The Natural Heritage of Indiana*, page 7

30 Marion T. Jackson, *The Natural Heritage of Indiana*, page 10

31 Marion T. Jackson, *The Natural Heritage of Indiana*, page 11

32 Marion T. Jackson, *The Natural Heritage of Indiana*, page 12

33 Marion T. Jackson, *The Natural Heritage of Indiana*, page 16

34 Marion T. Jackson, *The Natural Heritage of Indiana*, page 21

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“crescent-shaped ridges or terminal moraines at right angles to its line of retreat.”<sup>35</sup> In Indiana, the moraines include the most southerly Shelbyville moraine followed northeasterly by the Mississinewa, Salamonie, Wabash and Fort Wayne. The Fort Wayne Moraine is the most easterly of the moraines in Indiana, although the receding glacier continued its Morainal depositions in northwest Ohio.<sup>36</sup> At times, the melting ice caused the Glacial Lake Maumee to spill its floodwaters into its previous southwestern drainage, creating the Little River Sluiceway. This occurred because the excess waters breached the Fort Wayne Moraine. When the glacial lake “was drained sufficiently to cease pouring over the notched moraine,” silt and “normal” lake levels caused the glacial lake to drain and recede back to present day Lake Erie.<sup>37</sup>

Today, some of the results of the glacial drainage and depositions are:

- Fort Wayne, the St. Joseph and St. Mary’s Rivers were all separated from the Glacial Wabash River by Morainal deposits, causing the Wabash’s modern day headwaters to be located south and east of Fort Wayne, in Ohio, but not draining the Fort Wayne area.
- The Wabash River watershed is the northern limit of the Ohio River Valley.
- The Wabash River drains two-thirds of Indiana in a southwesterly flow to its confluence with the Ohio River in southwestern Indiana. The Mississinewa, Salamonie, Eel and Little Rivers (draining the Morainal deposits) all drain into the Wabash in north central Indiana.
- The St. Joseph River, draining south from Michigan, along the Fort Wayne Moraine merges with the St. Mary’s River draining north from central Ohio. The convergence of the two rivers, in the historic center of Fort Wayne, is the headwaters of the Maumee River, draining northeasterly to Lake Erie, and connecting to the entire Great Lakes water system.
- The shortest distance historically from the confluence of the St. Joseph and St. Mary’s Rivers to a connection with the Wabash River watershed and then the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, is through the sluiceway, along the “Portage” to the Little River, a distance of only approximately nine miles.

<sup>35</sup> Little River Wetlands Project, *Geologic History*, <http://www.lrw.org>

<sup>36</sup> Alton Lindsey, *Natural Features of Indiana*, page 22

<sup>37</sup> Little River Wetlands Project, *Geologic History*, <http://www.lrw.org>

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- In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Fort Wayne was known as the “Summit City” because of its location at the highest elevation along the 459-mile long Wabash-Erie Canal.<sup>38</sup>
- Fort Wayne is located at the junction of three physiographic regions in Indiana, the Auburn Morainal Complex, the Bluffton Till Plain, and the Maumee Lake Plain.<sup>39</sup>

The relevance of this early landform development is that it would result in Fort Wayne, Indiana being an ‘ideal’ location for human occupation and development, resulting in historic events that would shape the United States for more than 400 years. Due to its extraordinary history, many books have been written about Fort Wayne’s historical development and therefore do not need to be repeated here. Below is a very brief history in the context of transportation development leading to the focus period of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Without an explanation of how Fort Wayne developed before 1900, the ensuing 50 years would have no foundation. A complete history of the transportation development in Fort Wayne can be addressed in future nominations of the remaining components.

**Connecting Fort Wayne to the World**

**10,000 BP-1824**

According to George R. Wilson in *Early Indiana Trails and Surveys*,

In pioneer days, the line of least resistance was the line of travel, hence streams were the lines of travel when possible. When streams did not lead to the desired destination, forest paths [created by animals and Paleoindians] were used. In time, these became bridle paths, sled roads, wagon roads, etc. Thus animal paths, Indian trails, military roads, etc. became highways. When it was possible, these old paths were on ridges, and usually watersheds. Settlements were made on these paths, and eventually the line of travel became the line of intelligence. Men and animals did not travel in straight lines, for they preferred a sure footing and a hard path to water and swamps.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> [www.cityoffortwayne.org/new/planning/historic](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/new/planning/historic)

<sup>39</sup> Gray, Indiana Geological Survey, *Physiographic Divisions of Indiana*, <http://igs.indiana.edu>

<sup>40</sup> Wilson, *Early Indiana Trails and Surveys*, page 16

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During the last glaciation, c.10,000 BP (Before Present), the “earliest Native Americans who populated the New World (including the area now known as Indiana)” were known as Paleoindians.<sup>41</sup> The “Paleoindian occupations in Indiana were of low population density, and often sites were short-term, specialized activity areas found near large streams and other major water sources.”<sup>42</sup> They were hunter-gatherers in a cooler and changing climate, who were dependent on existing game and vegetation for survival. Several sites are located in Allen County, where Fort Wayne is the county seat.<sup>43</sup>

During the period 10,000 BP to c.1700, the Native Americans determined that the shortest, most facile route connecting Quebec, Canada, Lake Erie and the eastern Great Lakes riverine system to the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, Louisiana and the Gulf of Mexico was through the Maumee-Wabash Sluiceway, known by the French word ‘Portage.’

In dry times, travelers might have to traverse ‘la longue portage,’ the entire 24 miles or so to the forks of the Wabash [River]. However, in early spring or very wet periods, it was often possible to pass through the Maumee-Wabash Sluiceway without once having to leave ones canoe or bateaux. Normally the portage was about nine miles in length, stretching from the bayou marsh or head of navigation on the St. Mary’s [River], thence southwesterly following the higher ground on the northside of the oxbow on the Little River (the French Riviere Petite) near the [present day] intersection of I-69 and US 24.<sup>44</sup>

The north-south east-west route through the Maumee-Wabash Portage was the most important trade route to the interior of the country and in particular the Northwest Territory. At least four cultural groups recognized the importance of this portage over three centuries. The transition from a Native American seasonal camp to the first platting of the city of Fort Wayne by Americans included conflicts and wars between Native American tribes, the French, British, and finally Americans through the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Native Americans: The first group to use the Portage were the Paleoindians, and eventually, the Miami tribes. “During the closing years of the seventeenth century the Miamis, Oujatanons, and other smaller tribes began settling, or

<sup>41</sup> Jones, *Early Peoples of Indiana*, pgs 2-3

<sup>42</sup> Jones, *Early Peoples of Indiana*, pgs 3-4

<sup>43</sup> Interview with State Archaeologist, James R. Jones III, Ph.D.

<sup>44</sup> Little River History, [www.lrw.org/lrwphist.htm](http://www.lrw.org/lrwphist.htm)

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resettling, in what is now Indiana.”<sup>45</sup>

The entire modern Lakeside area of Fort Wayne [east of the St. Joseph and north of the Maumee Rivers] was the site of Native American settlements for as long as 10,000 years. The settlement known as Kekionga, ‘The Blackberry Patch,’ was home of the Miami Nation and in the 1790s was the center of the ‘Miami Confederacy,’ including such other tribes as the Huron, Shawnee, and Ottawa.<sup>46</sup>

In addition to the above tribes, the confluence area of the Maumee River, over time, was also home to the Miami sub-tribes of the Wea, Piankashaw, Mengakonkia, Pepicokia, Kilatika, and the Atchatchakangouen (or Crane band). The British used the name Twightwees for the Miamis.<sup>47</sup>

French: The first Europeans to make contact with the Native Americans were of French descent and with two distinct agendas. The Jesuit missionaries had early plans to form a Christian Indian nation around the Great Lakes.<sup>48</sup> The second group, the fur traders, established the lucrative beaver fur trade route from Canada to New Orleans, through the Portage. The time of their arrival is thought to be in the 17th century. According to Thornbrough and Riker, “the first great French figure to cross Indiana was Sieur de la Salle, who passed through the northwest corner of the state in 1679, accompanied by Father Hennepin.”<sup>49</sup> However, other records indicate that Samuel de Champlain “is believed to have seen the Maumee in 1614 or 1615.”<sup>50</sup> The first white settlement was established in 1686 in present day Fort Wayne. It was the first French fort and it was located on the east bank of the St. Mary’s River, north of the present day Greeley Street at Superior Street. It was occupied until 1750. At one time, it was known as Fort Miami.<sup>51</sup> The last French fort was located on the east bank of the St. Joseph River at present day Delaware Street.<sup>52</sup> A French village occupied the area west of the St. Joseph River and north of the St. Mary’s River.<sup>53</sup>

45 Esarey, Logan, Ph. D., *A History of Indiana, from its Exploration to 1850*, page 16

46 Indiana University-Purdue University-Fort Wayne: Walking Tours of Fort Wayne, Indiana  
<http://www.ipfw.edu/ipfwhist/ftwayne/kekionga.htm>

47 Interview with Indiana State Archaeologist Jones, James R. III, Ph.D.

48 Esarey, Logan, Ph. D., *A History of Indiana, from its Exploration to 1850*, page 1

49 Thornbrough and Riker, in *Readings in Indiana History*, page 6

50 Griswold, B. J. *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 27

51 Griswold, B. J. *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 34

52 Griswold, B. J. *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 43

53 Griswold, B. J. *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 85

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British: According to Griswold, the second French fort---Post Miami---surrendered to the British under Ensign Holmes in 1763. The fort was standing as late as 1765. It was located on the left bank of the St. Joseph River above the confluence of the St. Joseph and St. Mary's River.<sup>54</sup>

American: The first American fort was located south of the St. Mary's River and west of the Maumee River. It was located west of present day Clay Street and north of present day East Berry Street. It was erected by General Anthony Wayne in 1794 and demolished in 1800. It included a military cemetery. The second fort was also located west of Clay Street but north of Main Street, a block north. It was built in 1800 and included gardens to the west. The present day Old Fort Park is assumed to be located on the site of the second fort.<sup>55</sup>

When Fort Wayne was constructed in 1794, the site and its surrounds at the headwaters of the Maumee River had been an active trade center that included Indian villages and white settlements. On or near the St. Joseph, St. Mary's and Maumee Rivers, in addition to Kekionga (also known as Miamitown), Le Gris (1792) was established by the Miami, Chillicothe (1788) and Piquas (1790) by the Shawnee tribe, and three other villages by the Delaware (1787, 1791).<sup>56</sup> In 1810, the Potawatomi established the village of Metea on the St. Joseph River, north of historic Fort Wayne,<sup>57</sup> and the Miami village of Richardville existed c.1830.<sup>58</sup>

### Connecting Fort Wayne to the World in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

At the same time that battles were being fought for control of the site of present day Fort Wayne, the federal government passed the "Ordinance for ascertaining the mode of disposing of lands in the western territory" commonly known as the Land Ordinance of 1785.<sup>59</sup> That ordinance established the orderly rectangular grid system for land platting that began in Ohio with the principal meridian and extended west to the Pacific coast. The ordinance enabled both settlers and speculators to own land with precise boundaries and locations. Two years later, in 1787, the Northwest Territory, including present day Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and parts of Wisconsin, was established.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Griswold, B. J. *Guide to Fort Wayne*, page 99

<sup>55</sup> Griswold, B. J. *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 139

<sup>56</sup> Tanner, Helen *Atlas of Great Lakes Indians*, page 88

<sup>57</sup> Tanner, Helen *Atlas of Great Lakes Indians*, page 99

<sup>58</sup> Tanner, Helen *Atlas of Great Lakes Indians*, page 134

<sup>59</sup> Johnson, in Conzen, Michael P. *The Making of the American Landscape*, page 128

<sup>60</sup> Thornbrough et al., *Readings in Indiana History*, page 90

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In the next thirty-two years, the Northwest Territory was subdivided until the Indiana Territory boundaries were generally the present day state boundaries. In 1816, having met the recommended requirement for statehood of a population of 60,000 people, the federal government passed the enabling legislation for the Territory to become the nineteenth state---the State of Indiana.<sup>61</sup>

### Early Land Routes

The challenges of settling in the new state began with being able to access land to own, and then to travel to posts and early communities to sell surplus goods for individual economic gain. The land and transportation system at the time is described as:

Difficult and hazardous conditions of travel prevailed in the teens and early twenties. The navigation of rivers was impaired by fallen trees, rocks, rapids, shoals, ice, sandbars, strong currents, islands, floods and other obstructions. Roads varied from deep mud to dust, depending upon the weather, with stumps, ruts, mudholes, hilly terrain, fallen trees, rocks, and swamps as common obstacles. Crossing unabridged streams was frequently dangerous and at times impossible. Whether travel was by water or by land exposure to rain, heat, cold, snow, mosquitoes, and wind was often experienced as the seasons came and went. . . . Goods and persons were transported principally by flatboats, keelboats, and canoes, if by water; and by wagons, carts, sleds, and horseback, if on land. Individuals did much travel afoot. . . . The early settlers found a sprawling network of trails which had been used by Indians and animals for an unknown period of time. Perhaps roughly four fifths of Indiana was forested when statehood began thus this network principally wound through timbered areas. The overhanging branches of trees often spread across the trails, and travelers might proceed for miles without the rays of sun occasionally penetrating through the dense forest canopy. Removing fallen timber and other obstacles from these paths, plus adding stone or logs in some soft places, was a necessary first step in pioneer road building. But in reality, new roads were *cut* or *opened* rather than built, and stumps of larger trees often were left in the roadway.<sup>62</sup>

Realizing this immense challenge to economic development, the Indiana General Assembly passed in 1819 and subsequent years, acts obligating manpower and money to build and fund road development. At first, "the responsibility for opening and maintaining public roads rested almost entirely with local officials and citizens. The

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<sup>61</sup> Thornbrough et al, *Readings in Indiana History*, page 157

<sup>62</sup> Carmony, Donald F., *Indiana 1816-1850: The Pioneer Era, History of Indiana*, pgs 38-39

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initial state legislative session gave county commissioners the power to open, relocate, or vacate roads.”<sup>63</sup> “Neighborhood roads were important, but roads connecting settlements and towns were much needed. Early in 1820 the legislature authorized the location of about two dozen ‘permanent roads,’ largely in counties near the perimeter of the state . . . .”<sup>64</sup> In 1821, the legislature appropriated monies from the Three Percent Fund for the opening of twenty-two ‘state’ roads. The Three Per Cent Roads were funded by three percent of the proceeds from the sale of federal lands within Indiana’s borders.<sup>65</sup>

The existing state, permanent and other roads to and from Fort Wayne in the early 1800s included Piqua, Bluffton, Wayne Trace. The existing riverways were the St. Joseph, St. Mary’s and Maumee Rivers. At mid-century, some of the dirt paths and trails were improved by adding wood planks to the surface. Examples of plank roads that were constructed include the Lima Plank Road running north, the Piqua Plank Road (now Calhoun Street) to the southeast, and the Goshen Plank Road to the northwest.<sup>66</sup>

Hugh McCulloch describes his journey from LaPorte, Indiana to Fort Wayne in 1833:

Leaving Laporte [sic], I rode eastwardly over a rich but unsettled country to Goshen, the county seat of Elkhart County, and thence, turning southward, I reached Fort Wayne. . . . Fort Wayne was about as uninviting in every respect except its site as any of the towns through which I had passed, but it proved to be the end of my journey, which had been long and solitary, but by no means lonesome or tedious. The country over which I had traveled was not picturesque; no hills to relieve its flatness, few streams to diversify the scenery. It was simply a magnificent wilderness, mostly covered with lofty trees of almost countless varieties.<sup>67</sup>

In 1824, two speculators obtained land in present day Fort Wayne. John T. Barr, a merchant from Baltimore, Maryland, and John McCorkle, from Piqua, Ohio purchased the first tract of land, which is known as the Original Plat of Fort Wayne.<sup>68</sup> The original rectangular plat was located south of the St. Mary’s River and its confluence with the St. Joseph River to form the Maumee River. In addition, the plat was located west of the American fort sites. The northwest corner of the plat began on the west side of Calhoun Street at the intersection with Water Street (currently

63 Carmony, Donald F., *Indiana 1816-1850: The Pioneer Era, History of Indiana*, page 39

64 Carmony, Donald F., *Indiana 1816-1850: The Pioneer Era, History of Indiana*, page 40

65 Carmony, Donald F., *Indiana 1816-1850: The Pioneer Era, History of Indiana*, pgs 40-41

66 Dawson’s Daily Times, 1860, *Roads in Allen County*

67 Thornbrough et al, *Readings in Indiana History*, page 327

68 [www.cityoffortwayne.org/new/planning/historic](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/new/planning/historic)

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Superior Street). It extended east to Barr Street, which is one block east of Clinton Street. The south boundary was the alley south of Wayne Street. The plat included Water, Columbia, Main, Berry, and Wayne Streets, running east-west; and extended from Calhoun through Clinton and Barr Streets, running north-south.<sup>69</sup> The importance of early economic growth superseded even the Federal survey and platting of Fort Wayne. A modification of the platting occurred so that all streets north of Lewis and Jefferson extending north to the St. Mary's River, are not fixed to the true cardinal north-south meridian. Once source attributes this alteration to a single business owner, who did not want to move his tavern so that it aligned with the cardinal points of the Land Survey.<sup>70</sup> Another source attributes the street alignments running parallel to the St. Mary's River as a way to facilitate the building of the Wabash Canal through the original plat.<sup>71</sup> The town now platted and beginning to prosper lacked a major transportation route to enable it to connect to large trade centers in the Midwest and East. The Portage was considered too slow for moving goods and people.

### The Wabash-Erie Canal

George Washington envisioned a canal to connect the Wabash and Maumee Rivers.<sup>72</sup> Leaders of Fort Wayne and the state, began pursuing that idea as a way to connect Fort Wayne to the commerce of the Great Lakes and Mississippi. This new waterway would be the longest built in the United States, and span from Lake Erie to the Wabash River where larger boats could take merchant goods farther south. The waterway would link to the already completed Erie Canal in the state of New York, through Lake Erie.

Fort Wayne was again the primary reason and beneficiary of the canal system in Indiana. Bypassing the slower portage with a canal would efficiently connect "the Northeast" and St. Lawrence Seaway, via Lake Erie and the Maumee, to the Wabash and henceforth the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The economic vitality and future of Fort Wayne was dependent on this connection.

Tanner wrote:

The year 1830 historically marks the threshold of rapid white population advance along a band west of Lake Erie as a consequence of the completion in 1825 of the Erie Canal, linking the Mohawk River with Buffalo,

<sup>69</sup> *Streets of Fort Wayne*, 1953

<sup>70</sup> Ninth Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1913, page 21

<sup>71</sup> Creager Smith, City of Fort Wayne, Indiana

<sup>72</sup> Griswold, B. J. *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 305

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New York. The spurt in Great Lakes traffic, enhanced by the introduction of stream [steam] navigation in 1818, brought an influx of easterners as well as immigrant settlers from Europe into Upper Canada and the American Middle West in the 1830s.<sup>73</sup>

In Indiana, three canals were fully or partially constructed and two others were proposed. They included:

- The Central Canal (1832-1850), partially constructed, Peru to Indianapolis to Worthington.
- The Wabash-Erie Canal (1832-1850) constructed, Toledo, Ohio to Fort Wayne to Covington to Terre Haute to Evansville.
- The White Water Canal (1832-1865), partially constructed, Cincinnati, Ohio to Cambridge City to Muncie to Noblesville.
- A proposed canal, Fort Wayne to South Bend to Michigan City.
- A proposed canal, Huntington to Rochester to Gary to Calumet Harbor.<sup>74</sup>

The groundbreaking for the Wabash-Erie Canal took place in 1832, and the first section, from Fort Wayne running southwesterly to Huntington, Indiana was completed in 1835.<sup>75</sup> The canal entered Fort Wayne from the east, through New Haven and continued in a westerly route south of the Maumee and St. Mary's Rivers. It bisected the original plat of the city running east west, between present day Superior and Pearl Streets along Columbia. The route included locks and an aqueduct as it crossed the St. Mary's River. West of the St. Mary's River, the canal turned southwesterly to follow the Portage to Huntington. A basin (Orbison)<sup>76</sup> and docking area for maneuvering and turning boats, and unloading goods and people was located near Harrison and Columbia Streets.

More specifically, a map of the city in 1874 delineated the route of the canal as:

Entering the city from the east, north of Wayne Street at Glasgow, which is east of present day Anthony Boulevard, the canal curves north to meet the Maumee River at Harmer, follows the south shore of the Maumee to Berry, where it leaves the riverbank and runs directly northwest to Lafayette Street. At Lafayette, the canal is a straight line running parallel to Wayne Street, between it and Columbia Street. At Harrison Street, the canal widens into a triangular shape known as the Orbison Basin. From this basin, the canal continues somewhat southwesterly, north of Pearl and then

<sup>73</sup> Tanner, Helen *Atlas of Great Lakes Indians*, page 122

<sup>74</sup> Fatout, Paul, *Indiana Canals*, page 144

<sup>75</sup> John Brown Stone Warehouse National Register Nomination, Section 8, page 12

<sup>76</sup> [www.cityoffortwayne.org/new/planning/historic](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/new/planning/historic) History of Fort Wayne

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Main Street, to the St. Mary's River at Rockhill Street. An aqueduct carries the canal over the St. Mary's River. The canal then widens and runs northwesterly to the general intersection of Rumsey and Burgess Streets. At this point, two engineered structures come together, the Wabash-Erie Canal turns sharply southwest and leaves the city, and the feeder canal from the northeast joins the primary canal structure.

The Feeder Canal

Due to the higher elevation of Fort Wayne (the Summit City), a feeder canal was needed to get water into the canal. The feeder canal originated in the St. Joseph River, approximately six miles north of its link to the main canal. It followed a southwesterly route that crossed present day State Boulevard between Clinton Street and Spy Run Avenue. It continued in a southwesterly direction and merged with the main canal at Wheeler and Rumsey Streets, approximately a half-mile northwest of Swinney Park.<sup>77</sup>

The engineering of the feeder canal necessitated the construction of a dam across the St. Joseph River. "This dam was one of the most important achievements in building the canal."<sup>78</sup>

Poinsatte goes on to say:

An enormous undertaking for its day, the dam was constructed 'by men working with hand tools, horses and mules. The purpose of the dam was the creation of a lake to impound a water supply for the summit section. . . . The dam, begun in 1832, was not completed until 1834; floods repeatedly delayed its construction. When completed, the dam was a huge mass of forest trees, sand and gravel; it rose 17 feet above the river bed and was 230 feet long between abutments. These abutments were 25 feet high, 20 feet wide and 110 feet long.' . . . The abutments and the site of the dam may still be traced in old Robison Park [in 1969].<sup>79</sup>

In 1843, the Ohio links of the canal finally were opened thus providing a canal system from Lafayette, Indiana, through Fort Wayne to Lake Erie and the Erie Canal.<sup>80</sup>

During the next fifteen years, Fort Wayne would thrive. With heavy traffic on the canal, and the economic benefit which resulted from it, the city became the major distribution and shipping point for agricultural products in northeast Indiana. It also began to attract artisans and small industry which produced items for

<sup>77</sup> <http://igs.indiana.edu/> Indiana Geological Survey

<sup>78</sup> Charles R. Poinsatte, *Fort Wayne During the Canal Era*, page 41

<sup>79</sup> Charles R. Poinsatte, *Fort Wayne During the Canal Era*, page 41

<sup>80</sup> John Brown Stone Warehouse National Register Nomination, Section 8, page 13

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shipment on the canal, or received raw materials on the canal to be sold in Fort Wayne.

With the increase in business and industry, and the increased ease of travel to Fort Wayne, the population of the city soared. In 1840, three years before the canal was opened to Lake Erie, the population of Fort Wayne is estimated at 1,500. Ten years later, the population was 4,282, an increase of 166 percent. By 1853, it had risen to 6,500, approximately four times the population of 1840.<sup>81</sup>

“Equally has the Wabash trade route promoted the economic development of the Northwest, affected the political life of the people, improved their social conditions, socializing the communities through which it ran, and assist in the nationalization of the regions it penetrated. . . .”<sup>82</sup>

Although the canal system was thought to be the venue to guarantee Fort Wayne’s economic growth, no one foresaw its swift demise. Coming together in the mid-century were rising costs for maintenance and rebuilding of the rotting wood structures; cost overruns due to unplanned extensions of the canal (the Wabash River is too shallow to support large boats); mismanagement in cash handling; and the Industrial Revolution with its most recent inventions.

### The Railroad System

The Railroad Era in Fort Wayne began with the arrival, by canal boat, of a steam rail locomotive in 1854.<sup>83</sup> In 1874 supervision of the canal ended, and “the last canal boat was seen in Fort Wayne about 1881.”<sup>84</sup> The first railroad line in Fort Wayne was the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne, and Chicago Railroad. It was intended to connect Fort Wayne with the already booming Chicago industrial area. The rail line was later known as the Pennsylvania Railroad---the Pennsy.

The first rail line, located on the south side of the existing town, bisected the growing city into a north and south section by the end of the century. The line, running southeast to west entered the city near Moeller Road, Pontiac

<sup>81</sup> John Brown Stone Warehouse National Register Nomination, Section 8, pgs 13-14

<sup>82</sup> Thornbrough et al, *Readings in Indiana History*, page 336

<sup>83</sup> [www.cityoffortwayne.org/new/planning/historic](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/new/planning/historic)

<sup>84</sup> John Brown Stone Warehouse National Register Nomination, Section 8, page 18

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Street and Wayne Trace, on the southeast side. It left the city due west on a line along the south boundary of Swinney Park, only one-half mile from the center of town. The freight yard was located on the southeast side of town between Wayne Trace, Pontiac, Hayden and Hanna Streets. It was approximately one and one-half miles long and a quarter mile wide.

In 1880, there were six separate rail lines in Fort Wayne, two of which were national lines, linking the country from coast to coast through Fort Wayne. They were:

1. Cincinnati, Richmond & Fort Wayne
2. Fort Wayne, Jackson & Saginaw
3. Fort Wayne, Muncie & Cincinnati
4. Grand Rapids & Indiana
5. Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago (coast to coast, first rail line in Fort Wayne)
6. Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific, (coast to coast)<sup>85</sup>

A third national line---the New York, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad built its rail lines on the abandoned canal right-of-way beginning in 1882. The rail line was commonly known as the Nickel Plate.<sup>86</sup> Its tracks entered the city from the east, and bisected the city south of the Maumee and St. Mary's Rivers, leaving the city due west, three blocks north of Swinney Park. The rail line, somewhat elevated on the canal right-of-way, hindered north south traffic flow, and physically and visually cut off the two rivers from the downtown and its residents. In the 1950s, the tracks were elevated above the city streets allowing through traffic on Clinton, Lafayette Streets, Fairfield, Ewing, Harrison, Calhoun, Barr, and Columbia Streets.

In 1914, Griswold describes Fort Wayne's transportation facilities:

Fort Wayne has seven important railroads. Three of these are great east-and-west trunk lines; one is an important north-and-south trunk line. Interchange of traffic within the city afforded by a beltline of railway and connecting tracks which assures the greatest convenience. Receivers and shippers have fast freight service without transfers, from and to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Detroit, Toledo, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha, Chicago, Milwaukee and the Straits of Mackinaw.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Robert C. Kingsbury, *Atlas of Indiana*, page 76

<sup>86</sup> Richard S. Simons, *Railroads of Indiana*, page 25

<sup>87</sup> Griswold, *Guide to Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1914*, page 14

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The rail line components in the city included shared and individual passenger and freight stations, yards and roundhouses, machine shops, car shops and office buildings.

### The Industrial Revolution

One of the prime forces moving the world, the United States and Fort Wayne into the Modern era was the Industrial Revolution. Beginning in Europe, c.1730, with the development of a steam engine, the railroad, the internal combustion engine and finally the automobile, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century;<sup>88</sup> the invention of efficiently powered mechanical devices were integral components in the connecting and therefore civilizing of the United States. The establishment of the national railroad network, and again, Fort Wayne's location, enabled the city to keep pace with the Industrial Revolution and the continuing development of the city as a trade center. Nationally and internationally, the inventions of the macadamized road (1816), Portland cement (1824), improvements in steel-making (1866), the bicycle (c.1870), the telephone (1876), the light bulb (1879), and the diesel engine (1892) furthered the connectivity of cities and towns and the movement of people and goods in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Not only did Fort Wayne facilitate the movement of goods, its residents were responsible for many inventions in the Industrial Revolution. They include:

1. The gas pump by Sylvanus F. Bowser, the predecessor of gasoline pumps throughout the world.
2. The Jenny arc light, by James Jenny, would eventually be owned by General Electric Company.<sup>89</sup>

The inventions, the inventors, and the companies they built all contributed to the modernization of Fort Wayne in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### The Automobile Changes Everything

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, man depended on the natural systems---the rivers and topography---to enable transportation and therefore survival. During the century, driven by the forces of the Industrial Revolution, democracy

<sup>88</sup> <http://killerroos.com/4/indrevou.htm>

<sup>89</sup> Griswold, B. J. *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 509

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and free enterprise, man created a multi-state water route and a trans-continental land route to connect the continent. The water route---the canal system---was surpassed by the land route---the 'rail' road because of the need for reliable, fast and faster movement of people and goods. Not only was man surviving, but he began to have expendable money and time and other wants and needs began to surface---he was becoming civilized. He *needed* clean air, clean water and a relief from everyday stress. He *wanted* to 'see the country,' have 'more money in his pocket' and primarily he wanted the 'American dream,' the single family residential unit---his own home. By the end of the century, in theory, man controlled both the land and water systems, but dependable transportation---the link between man and his wants--was missing.

The different components of the advancing civilization moved at different speeds. One example being the improvement of the land transportation system. The national network of rail systems swiftly carried people from coast to coast and city to city, but the more personal and individualized automobile was hindered by an undeveloped road system. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century,

road-making techniques remained rather primitive and inefficient, for most improved public highways were paved with gravel or crushed rock, at best a waterbound-macadamized surface, needing repairs early and often. . . . The coming of the automobile did more than anything else to stimulate the good roads movement. Pioneer manufacturers and promoters of motor vehicles in Indiana were active in popularizing the new mode of travel and seeking the improved highways needed for its fullest enjoyment.<sup>90</sup>

Characterizing the American spirit for adventure, in 1903, on a fifty-dollar dare, Dr. Horatio Nelson Jackson completed the first automobile 'road trip' across the United States.<sup>91</sup> At least once, he needed to be towed by a horse and wagon over a dirt road, thus exemplifying the state of technology and the state of the continental road system at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### The Lincoln Highway

Carl G. Fisher, an Indianapolis businessman, former bicycle racer, and one of the original promoters of the Indianapolis 500 Race initiated the movement for the first transcontinental highway in the United States.

<sup>90</sup> Phillips, *Indiana in Transition-1880-1920*, page 263

<sup>91</sup> www.pbs.org

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In September, 1912, he laid before a group of automobile manufacturers and dealers at a meeting in Indianapolis his proposal for a hard-surfaced coast-to-coast roadway which aroused national enthusiasm and support and spurred the construction of the Lincoln Highway.”<sup>92</sup>

He presented a captive audience with his plan to build a continuous coast-to-coast highway from New York to San Francisco in time for motorists to travel across country to the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1915. Although the Automobile Association of America (AAA) had proposed a transcontinental highway as early as 1902 (the same year the organization was formed), Fisher was the first to devise an actual plan for building a road and financing it. Fisher’s financing plan called for raising \$10 million in donations from those who manufactured automobiles and auto accessories and from selling memberships in an organization which shortly became known as the Lincoln Highway Association. When Frank A. Seiberling of Goodyear immediately pledged \$300,000 toward the effort, Fisher’s idea began to assume reality.<sup>93</sup>

Fisher’s plan has been called one of those ideas whose time had come. What this means is that advances in technology had become the driving force. The good roads movement of the 1880s wouldn’t have achieved much more than the plank roads movement of the 1840s had it not been for the invention of the internal-combustion engine [and its improvements by ] in 1885<sup>94</sup> by two Germans, Karl Benz and Gottlieb Daimler [working separately], and related developments in America and Europe during the 1880s and 1890s. Invention of the modern low-wheeled, geared bicycle in 1885 also contributed to the technology of road transportation. The ‘safety’ bicycle enabled people to travel roads more conveniently and more swiftly, which increased public demand for good roads. In addition, bicycle technology contributed to the development of automobile steel-tube framing, ball and roller bearings, differential gearing, acetylene lamps, and pneumatic tires.<sup>95</sup>

In the United States, approximately 1500 separate automobile manufacturing companies were organized by World War I, most of which did not survive but all of which contributed to an exciting period of experimentation with steam, electric, and gasoline-powered motor vehicles.<sup>96</sup>

Within the state of Indiana, the number of automobile related inventions and entrepreneurs rivaled the number in

<sup>92</sup> Phillips, *Indiana in Transition-1880-1920*, page 265

<sup>93</sup> Conrad, *The Lincoln Highway on Greene County, IA*, Multiple Property Cover Document, page E-5

<sup>94</sup> Incorrect attribution and date, refer to [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/internal\\_combustion\\_engine#History](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/internal_combustion_engine#History)

<sup>95</sup> Conrad, *The Lincoln Highway on Greene County, IA*, Multiple Property Cover Document, page E-5

<sup>96</sup> Conrad, *The Lincoln Highway on Greene County, IA*, Multiple Property Cover Document, page E-4,5

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Detroit, Michigan. The names associated with the history of the automobile, and therefore transportation; Allison, Cummins, Duesenberg, Haynes, Marmon, Parry, Studebaker and Stutz among others were all from Indiana. A statewide Multiple Property Documentation of this component of the civilizing of the United States is recommended.

The phenomenal increase in motorized vehicles did not, however, spur a quick transformation of travel conditions. Fisher overestimated the possibility of 'building' a transcontinental highway in time for travel to the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition, given the general condition of existing roads and the lack of expertise in highway engineering. The concept of mass-production had evolved, but the concept of good streets and roads that went somewhere besides uptown or around the block had not. In 1900, the United States had the poorest roads of all industrialized nations. Excepting cobbled streets, there were only 200 miles of hard-surfaced roads in the whole country. Road conditions improved very little between then and 1912 when Fisher launched his highway plan. By that time, there were about 2,500,000 miles of road in the United States, 93 per cent of them unimproved dirt roads.<sup>97</sup>

At the same time in Fort Wayne, the city civil engineer reported a total of 61 ¼ miles of paved streets, of which, 37 miles were asphalt, 22 ½ brick, and 1 ¾ were tarvia (a sticky tar based compound applied to dirt roads).<sup>98</sup>

In 1912, with the first federal aid for road building still four years in the future, and a federal highway system even further away, Fisher was ahead of his times, both politically and practicably. But Fisher was unconcerned about facilitating interstate commerce, mail delivery, or national defense. He was simply interested in promoting the sale of automobiles and auto products, including the carbide headlights manufactured by Prest-O-Lite, another of his business ventures. He not only wanted an organized route, but he wanted it graded and surfaced. Gravel would help, but he and others were attracted to his idea were more interested in the 170,000 miles or so of hard-surfaced streets and roads that were scattered around the country, roads surfaced with brick, asphalt, bitulithic, macadam, or concrete. To promote the coast-to-coast highway, Fisher gathered together a group of men who either were or would become leaders in the automotive and highway construction industries; . . . On July 1, 1913, this informal group officially organized as the Lincoln Highway Association, dedicated to the 'establishment of a continuous improved highway from the Atlantic to the Pacific, open to lawful traffic of all description without toll charges . . . in memory of Abraham Lincoln.'<sup>99</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Conrad, *The Lincoln Highway on Greene County, IA*, Multiple Property Cover Document, page E-6

<sup>98</sup> Griswold, *Guide to Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1914*, page 25

<sup>99</sup> Conrad, *The Lincoln Highway on Greene County, IA*, Multiple Property Cover Document, page E-7

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On September 10, 1913, the Lincoln Highway Association announced the route for the 3,389 mile improved highway. The story of the Lincoln Highway presents countless opportunities for connecting local history to the evolution of a national pattern of highways, both figuratively and literally. As Drake Hokanson has noted, 'To know the Lincoln Highway and the continent it crossed, it is necessary to look at the road in piecemeal fashion, not as a line bridging a continent in a great leap but as an end-to-end collection of different roads, paths, and routes.' [And the associated buildings, structures, sites, objects and landscapes]. The highway began as an assortment of existing turnpikes, wagon roads, and established trails, and gradually evolved over the next fifteen years into an improved, well-marked, and highly promoted highway.<sup>100</sup>

In 1928 the highway was marked by concrete posts set by Boy Scouts across America."<sup>101</sup>

In Indiana, the Lincoln Highway entered the state from Ohio, east of New Haven, Indiana, passed through Fort Wayne and continued to South Bend. It exited the state at Dyer, Indiana where it then entered Illinois. Near the Illinois border, in Dyer, Indiana, the visionary Carl Fisher engaged master landscape architect, Jens Jensen to design a one-mile section of the "Ideal" Highway. It included a park-like resting area for camping and picnics. In 1915-1916, the towns and cities along the Lincoln Highway in Indiana included, from east to west:

New Haven, Fort Wayne, Churubusco, Merriam, Wolf Lake, Kimmell, Ligonier, Benton, Goshen, Elkhart, Osceola, Mishawaka, South Bend, New Carlisle, LaPorte, Westville, Valparaiso, Deep River, Merrillville, Schererville and Dyer.<sup>102</sup>

In Fort Wayne, the route led through the city again from due east to west.

In 1927, the Fort Wayne City Directory listed the following Lincoln Highway Route: Maumee Avenue (from the eastern city limits) west to Harmar, Harmar to Washington Blvd., west on Washington Blvd. to Harrison, north on Harrison to Putnam, west on Putnam to Wells, north on Wells to State Blvd., west on State Blvd. to Goshen Rd. (Portions of Maumee and Washington are now one-way streets, with a non-Lincoln Highway section of Washington and Jefferson Blvd. as parallel alternates.) In 1928, the route from the east was moved to New Haven Avenue. This route change brought travelers into Fort Wayne along the city's new Industrial Park. The 1928 route travels west on New Haven Avenue to its terminus at Wayne Trace, then continued west on Wayne

<sup>100</sup> Conrad, *The Lincoln Highway on Greene County, IA*, Multiple Property Cover Document, page E-8

<sup>101</sup> The Lincoln Highway Brochure, [www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org](http://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org)

<sup>102</sup> <http://alumnus.caltech.edu/~jlin/lincoln/maps/1924/in.gif>

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Trace to Fletcher, and Fletcher to Maumee, where it meets the original route, and continues into Fort Wayne.<sup>103</sup>

The completion of the Lincoln Highway resulted in tourist, industrial, and automobile service related enterprises being established along its route. The Knotty Pine Motel and Tourist Cabins, the Lincoln Highway Service Station and the International Harvester Complex are examples of these enterprises. In addition, attractions, recreation facilities, memorials and early apartment buildings were located there. Hayden Park (now John Nuckols Park) was the setting for the Anthony Wayne Monument to welcome people from the east. Concordia College gave evidence that Fort Wayne was an educated city. Bell's Roller Skating Rink offered recreational activities, and Memorial Park invited the veteran, the widow and the family to reflect on personal losses and democratic gain, particularly from World War I. Ternet's Tavern was popular before the route opened and continued to be so even in Prohibition. For people interested in the convenience of living or lingering on the coast-to-coast highway, the Knotty Pine Motel and Tourist Cabins offered accommodations.

The popularity of the highway was not limited to the convenience of getting from one town to another, or even from coast-to-coast on one road. Among other factors, the cerebral experience of driving the automobile, the unrestricted, unlimited movement through the entire country, and the experience of the varying national landscape all proved popular reasons to make the most of the Lincoln Highway journey. The historic Black Swamp in Ohio showed a changing landscape. The Maumee River, only 400 feet away, and its associated historical markers gave evidence of the importance of the place in the history of the country. The Lincoln Highway Bridge in Fort Wayne offered views of a very old river and itself and the adjacent Wells Street Iron Bridge provided evidence of the making of a modern city. West of the city the rolling moraines hinted of the glaciers that once covered the area, and the Plain and Prairie into Illinois provided the first visual images of the scale, immenseness and grandeur of the United States.

### Connecting Fort Wayne to its Residents

#### **Early Connections**

In 1824, when the original plat was surveyed, Calhoun and Clinton were the primary north south streets; Main and Berry evolved into the busy east west corridors. Modes of transportation included horse and buggy, stagecoach<sup>104</sup> or

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<sup>103</sup> ARCH, Inc. 2003 *Lincoln Highway Landmarks in Allen County, Indiana, America's First Coast-to-Coast Road*

<sup>104</sup> Logan Esarey, *A History of Indiana*, page 262

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walking. The railroad connected Fort Wayne to the world, and led to the development of similar rail service to conveniently connect its citizens. New technology in steam and electric power enabled the development of the Interurban and Street Railway System.

The interurban, an electric railway operating between city centers, provided the first serious challenge to the steam railroads' dominance of the intercity passenger trade. By the end of World War I, 10,000 interurban cars operated over 18,000 miles of track. Indiana's interurban network, which peaked at 1,825 miles in 1914, reached 62 [of 92] counties and every large town except Bloomington, Bedford, Madison and Vincennes. Indiana's interurban mileage was second only to Ohio's 2,800 miles.<sup>105</sup>

The interurban also provided local service within Fort Wayne. All service began and ended at the Interurban Union Station located on West Main Street, between Webster and Ewing. Fort Wayne was the terminal point for five interurban routes.<sup>106</sup> A separate freight station, power station and car barns were located elsewhere in Fort Wayne. In 1914, the lines included:

- Fort Wayne and Northern Indiana Traction Line (Logansport division)
- Fort Wayne and Northern Indiana Traction Line (Bluffton division)
- Ohio Electric Railway
- Fort Wayne and Springfield Railway
- Toledo and Chicago Interurban Line
- Fort Wayne and Northwestern Interurban Line<sup>107</sup>

Service for the varying lines began between 1902 and 1907. The lines were abandoned between 1927 and 1941.<sup>108</sup>

The Street Railway System was the popular method of rapid transportation used to connect residents within the city. The first horse-drawn street car made its inaugural trip on January 6, 1872. The mode of transportation proved to be so popular with both users and investors that additional companies and routes were formed. The first routes of the system included "Calhoun street from Main street to Creighton avenue, with a branch on west [east] Creighton avenue from

<sup>105</sup> Sanders, *Limited, Locals, and Expresses, 1838-1971*, page 8

<sup>106</sup> Griswold, *Guide to Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1914*, page 61

<sup>107</sup> B. J. Griswold, *Guide to Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1914*, page 62-63

<sup>108</sup> Robert C. Kingsbury, *Atlas of Indiana*, page 78

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Calhoun street to Hanna street.”<sup>109</sup> In 1892, the electric rail car replaced the horse-drawn trolley. Consolidation of street railway companies led to the ownership of all lines by the Fort Wayne Traction Company. By 1911, more consolidation merged two interurban and the urban lines into one company, the Fort Wayne and Northern Indiana Traction Company.<sup>110</sup> By 1914 the primary north-south routes ran on Broadway, Calhoun, and Spy Run. The east-west routes included Huffman, Main, Jefferson, Lewis, Creighton Avenue, and Pontiac Street. All service was linked at Transfer Corner, located at Main and Calhoun Streets. The total mileage of track for the system in 1914 was 46.08.<sup>111</sup>

The railroads enabled the movement of people and goods within the entire country. Moreover, Fort Wayne’s location, only “450 miles from the geographic center and approximately at the population and economic center of the United States”<sup>112</sup> positioned the city for economic growth. However, rail-based industrialization would also bring enormous physical and cultural changes to the city. It enabled access to parks such as Robison, Lawton, Old Fort, Rockhill and Hayden and led to ‘streetcar’ suburbs along its lines. It also caused Fort Wayne to lose sight of its rivers, literally and figuratively, which continues today. The natural division of the city from the St. Mary’s, St. Joseph and Maumee Rivers together with Spy Run, was overlain with at least six railroad lines and the street railway system that artificially and physically divided the city into sections. The 1880 *Panoramic View of Fort Wayne* shows an ‘idyllic’ city center with tree-lined river banks, and forested plots. The canal added more, perhaps almost doubling the opportunity for contact with nature. The engineered canal enabled buildings to be built along its edge, and the social, commercial and industrial life of the city center grew.

The culmination of this separation occurred in two steps. In 1882, the Nickel Plate Railroad built its line on the former Wabash-Erie Canal bed, causing a primary physical and visual detachment of the Maumee, its headwaters, the St. Joseph River, and the St. Mary’s River running west to east, from the city center and all residential growth to the south and east. The second step occurred as an ongoing street ‘improvement’ to the 1950s when the Nickel Plate’s tracks were elevated, resulting in faster, more efficient automobile transportation, but also, an even more imposing barrier to maintaining Fort Wayne’s connection to its primary natural resource, and reason for existence---its three rivers. The St. Mary’s River running south to north---from present day Foster Park to Swinney Park---had only one major physical barrier to its access, the Pennsy Railroad (running east-west) along the southern border of Swinney Park.

<sup>109</sup> B. J. Griswold, *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 490

<sup>110</sup> B. J. Griswold, *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 524

<sup>111</sup> B. J. Griswold, *Guide to Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1914*, page 65

<sup>112</sup> *Rail Transportation and Highway Facilities of Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1936, page 2

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The new automobile coupled with the rising number of factories brought congestion, crowded living conditions, air and water pollution from smoke and waste, poor sanitation and hygiene, and the wasteful destruction and elimination of natural resources. All were a result of unregulated growth. Growth that in Indiana was shifting from a rural agriculture-based culture, to a commercial/industrial based center. Fort Wayne, though, whose primary economy had always been trade-based, was dealing directly with this movement of people and goods. The population grew from 26,880 in 1880, to 45,115 in 1900 and 86,549 in 1920.<sup>113</sup>

A Comprehensive System

The city limits in 1909 extended from Charlotte Avenue to the north (north of State Street); to just east of Walton (Anthony Blvd.) and Glasgow to the east; Rudisill to the south; and the St. Mary's River and the railroad tracks just east of Leesburg Road to the west. Within each rail or river-based section though was a mixture of industry, individual and multi-family residences, parks, commercial businesses, schools, churches and government buildings. Lack of clean water, air, sunlight, sanitation and trees, and unlimited, unregulated economic growth were common to all sections. To continue economic growth but provide for a quality of life for all residents that addressed the above needs necessitated a comprehensive plan for the city---a plan that would guide Fort Wayne into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and ensure its stature as an example of Modern Civic Art in a second-class city, as Boston, Chicago, Kansas City and Indianapolis were doing in their population classification.

In 1914, Griswold wrote:

In 1909, the Commercial Club of Fort Wayne, through a recommendation from its president, H. C. Rockhill, took action along all lines of civic betterment, and a committee was named to give special attention to the matter of parks, and river purification and beautification. C. H. Worden and R. B. Hanna headed this committee. Professor Chas. Zueblin, of the University of Chicago was engaged for a series of practical lectures on municipal improvements, and Charles Mulford Robinson, of Rochester, New York was engaged to make an exhaustive investigation and comprehensive report, with recommendations of the physical condition of the city . . . The organization of a central Civic Improvement Association with several affiliated associations formed in various parts of the city placed the movement on sure footing. All are doing splendid work.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>113</sup> Clifton J. Phillips, *Indiana in Transition-1880-1920*, page 366

<sup>114</sup> B. J. Griswold, *Guide to Fort Wayne, Indiana*, page 31

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**1910: The Improvement of Fort Wayne Indiana by Charles Mulford Robinson**

Robinson, one of the primary visionaries for the City Beautiful Movement and Modern Civic Art, published his Report for Fort Wayne in 1910---3,000 copies were printed. He characterized Fort Wayne as a “comparatively old city as cities go in the Middle West” yet it has “no mushroom growth.” He describes it as an

important railroad center, and the traffic facilities thus offered, its proximity to large markets, and its location in a rich tributary farming country have united to cause a consistently continuous growth and to determine beyond question that the city’s character, present and future, as a manufacturing and trading community.<sup>115</sup>

Robinson, in the first chapter, articulating the problem identified in Fort Wayne goes on to say that

The gradualness of the increase in population must have presented, one might think, ideal opportunities for municipal improvement. On the contrary, the very lack of spectacular booms to shock the civic consciousness into a realization of tendencies and destiny, has invited, heretofore, a degree of lethargy and procrastination. The streets are well paved, good sidewalks have recently been laid, the pavements are reasonably clean; but there has been little evidence of civic imagination. The community has now realized suddenly that a future, long permitted to look out for itself, has at last arrived; that narrow streets are getting unduly congested, that high buildings have gone up on sites that it might have been civic wisdom to keep open; that the beautiful rivers have become dumping grounds; that in the building up of vacant lots, the children have lost their play space. It has paused, taking account of these conditions, to learn what it can yet do to correct omissions of the past and to prepare for the assured future. Thus is the problem concerned largely, but not alone, with the present needs of Fort Wayne. It is, How can the present city better adjust itself to the requirements of that business and population which, in a now imminent future, lie before it?<sup>116</sup>

Robinson notes that Calhoun Street is still the primary north-south business artery; and that Main and Berry Streets are bearing the extension of the business district east and west. He correctly says that, the oldest part of town is between the two railroads---the Nickel Plate Road (along the former Canal way) and the Pennsylvania and Wabash railroads---a

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<sup>115</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, *Plan of Fort Wayne*, page 11

<sup>116</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, *Plan of Fort Wayne*, pgs 11-12

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distance of only  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile.

Due to the existing buildup of the city, he says that his report will only be general in character. "The report will point out the municipality's opportunities and needs as definitely as possible, but it will be the part of wisdom to reserve the detailed planning until the plans can be immediately carried out." He divides his suggestions into the following topics:

1. The Business Streets
2. The Official Quarter
3. Approaches to the New Station
4. An Industrial District
5. Public Market
6. Residence Streets
7. Improvement of the Parks
8. River Drive and Parkway System <sup>117</sup>

In Robinson's earliest book he describes the circulation (transportation) network as the skeleton of the city, where then, the business center is identified and then parks and open space are laid out secondly. In the remaining space, the residential and industrial areas are planned. In the existing Fort Wayne, though, he says that the city is already compactly planned (due to its age, historic beginnings as an outpost in the wilderness, natural river boundaries and built rail lines), and therefore widening the streets "is out of the question." The most obvious need in the business district is "finding a way to increase street capacity." <sup>118</sup> His suggestions for increasing street capacity are "to clear the walks as far as possible of obstructions; to accelerate traffic in the roadways, and to develop the convenience of parallel streets." <sup>119</sup> Robinson is also concerned about building heights in the business quarter—that they are limited, first for appropriate scale and dignity, and secondly because these proportions "constitute the basic principle of all sanitation, as for open spaces (of the street) provide the necessary sunlight, air and breathing spaces for the population surrounding them." <sup>120</sup>

Residence Streets:

<sup>117</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, *Plan of Fort Wayne*, pgs 13-14

<sup>118</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, *Plan of Fort Wayne*, page 15

<sup>119</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, *Plan of Fort Wayne*, page 15

<sup>120</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, *Plan of Fort Wayne*, page 33

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Fort Wayne's residence streets are better than its business thoroughfares. This does not only mean that they are pleasanter to see, as should be expected, but they are better adapted to their purpose. The poor rule of platting nearly all streets to a uniform width, regardless of the traffic they are likely to carry, has persisted with them as it has elsewhere; but it does less harm in the residence section than in the business. This is because for residence purposes the streets are almost always wide enough from lot line to lot line, while by means of parking---that is, putting grass between walk and curb---roadways can be narrowed as much as desired.<sup>121</sup>

River Drives:

As explained above, a component of the City Beautiful Movement was comprehensive planning, where components and solutions served more than one purpose and their design was more than functional, but elevated to art. In transportation components, a function of the street system was to move people and goods. However, a new (to the United States) additional function of some streets and roads was recreation and socialization. Merging the experience of driving---at first a horse and buggy, then bicycle and finally the automobile---with park land and the views into it---open green space, shade, dappled sunlight, trees, breezes, bodies of water, birds singing, and quiet---produced a new type of street called the river drive.

The importance and popularity of the rivers to the residents of Fort Wayne, even before a visionary speaker presented a plan is highlighted by Robinson's opening comment in his section on a River Drive and Parkway System. He says, "It was interesting and not a little significant to observe in the course of my investigations that the improvement of Fort Wayne was popularly interpreted to mean the planning of a river drive."<sup>122</sup>

**Fort Wayne's Greatest Natural Asset**

Robinson says that planning the river drive is a component of the comprehensive improvements of the city, and though he discusses other components first (Public Market, etc.) some are not as important as the River Drive. He goes on to say, "For in parking [green space along the road between it and the river banks] the river banks, and putting drive and walk along their edge, Fort Wayne will be turning to account its greatest natural asset, and developing its own proper individuality---in which, so far as this is gracious, rests the charm of every town."<sup>123</sup>

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121 Charles Mulford Robinson, *Plan of Fort Wayne*, page 58

122 Charles Mulford Robinson, *Plan of Fort Wayne*, page 96

123 Charles Mulford Robinson, *Plan of Fort Wayne*, page 96

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Robinson's 1910 Plan for Improvements in Fort Wayne is divided into three sections. Existing Parks & Drives, Proposed River Drives & Park Additions, and Proposed Boulevard Connections.

Existing Parks & Drives:

The existing parks, according to Robinson's plan included East Swinney, the north half of Lawton, three sections of Lakeside, McCulloch, Reservoir, Hayden, Old Fort and Weisser Parks. Additional park space that was identified included the north half of Guldlin Playground, and a rectangular shaped site located on the east side of Clinton close to the riverbank, in present day Headwaters Park. The existing drives included a linear strip of land along the east side of the St. Joseph River, called St. Joe Boulevard. It continued from the confluence easterly. Along the north bank only of the Maumee River. This 'drive' began at McDougall Street, north of Delaware Avenue, and extended to Walton Avenue, the present day Anthony Boulevard. The drive enabled Lakeside Park to be linked to both the Maumee and St. Joseph Rivers. Two other narrow strips of green space were located along either side of the St. Mary's River, beginning at Main Street on the north and extending south to Fair Street and West Jefferson Street.

Proposed River Drives & Park Additions:

Robinson's Plan proposes only two park additions, because he said that there was adequate parkland for the city at that time. He proposes to expand Swinney Park, north to Main Street and west to the former Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad track. He also includes the land north of the St. Mary's River and south of Fair Street in this park expansion. The other park expansion was proposed to be located at Lawton Park. He expands the park to Spy Run on the east, St. Mary's River on the south, and Clinton Street on the west.

Robinson's river drive extensions were literally off the map. Beginning at the north map limits, a river drive extended on both sides of the St Joseph River from Carson (north of State Street) south to connect to the existing drive at Delaware Street, on the east bank, and to Baltes Street on the west bank. Short connecting greenspace was added along the south bank of the St. Mary's River, from Clinton west to Wells Street, and from Guldlin Playground south to Main Street and the existing connection to Swinney Park. The most far-reaching and visionary proposal was his river drive along both sides of the St. Mary's River, extending 'up' river from Swinney Park to well beyond the City Limits at Rudisill, south to the Stelhorn Bridge, near present day Tillman Road. Along the west bank, he proposes that Bluffton Road become a part of this river drive system. All of these drives and park expansions are hand drawn lines on the map. The width of the green space is generally the same throughout the plan, and the drives run parallel to each river. The only exception being along St. Mary's River, west and east of the oxbow, known today as Foster Park.

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Proposed Boulevard Connections:

Proposed boulevards would create a loop drive and connections to the rivers from the east and south side of town. A boulevard would connect Lawton Park, the St. Joseph River and Lakeside Park east along Anderson and Tennessee Avenues. This boulevard would terminate at Walton (now Anthony Boulevard). Walton would be the primary north south boulevard connection on the east side of Fort Wayne. This boulevard would terminate at East Pontiac Street. The Pontiac Boulevard would continue west, with an inverted 'U' connection to Reservoir Park, and then follow Fairfield, Organ, Beaver and Nuttman Avenues to Broadway and back to the St. Mary's River. The Pontiac Boulevard would split in two at Hanna and continue south to Rudisill where it would also connect back to the St. Mary's River.

A short additional boulevard along West Superior Street would connect the Guldlin greenspace to the Wells Street bridge greenspace, continuing north along Calhoun to the river.

**1911: The Park and Boulevard System Plan for Fort Wayne, Indiana by George Edward Kessler**

Upon the presentation by Charles Mulford Robinson, "a widely known civic beautification expert, . . . two foremost problems" were identified. They were the "purification of the waters of our three rivers, long used as open sewers, and the ridding of our river banks of the disease-breeding and slum-appearing conditions prevailing along nearly their entire length of nine miles within the limits of the city."<sup>124</sup> A River Front Commission was formed in 1911 to address these problems. The Commission,

very wisely, [they thought] decided to employ the very best expert advice and service the country afforded, to solve the problems confronting us, and very thoroughly canvassing the names under consideration, voted unanimously to recommend to the Board of Park Commissioners the employment of the widely known landscape architect, Mr. George Kessler, of St. Louis and Kansas City, to prepare for us suggestions for a complete system of Parks, Boulevards, Driveways and River Bank Improvement, sufficient for the city's needs for many years to come.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 11

<sup>125</sup> Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 12

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The Commission reported that the first thing that Kessler recommended and,

and has at all times insisted, that if it can in anyway be accomplished, Fort Wayne should at once acquire the ownership of its riverbanks, and of many beautiful park strips adjoining them, which would afford an almost continuous and easily accessible narrow strip of park at the water's edge all through the built-up sections of the city.<sup>126</sup>

In Kessler's opening statements in his report to the Park Board, he said that

It is now thoroughly recognized that no community is just to itself if it neglects to make the most of its physical beauties. Further than this, no community can successfully compete with others of its class without amply providing open spaces for the enjoyment of outdoor recreation and building adequate and fine highways which may become the base line upon which good residence development will follow, which in turn creates materially better values and permanently maintains those values. . . . Every city that has undertaken consistent development of this kind has immediately gained in the contentment of its population, in a spirit of unity and in the pride that comes in the possession and use of fine public properties and invariably there is created a civic pride which no other public improvement will establish. The investment in this class of improvements becomes a real investment in real property.<sup>127</sup>

On the acquisition of the riverbank properties, Kessler points out "it should not be forgotten in considering these acquisitions that they are the only permanent properties for which a community spends its money and really remain the only permanent asset to represent expenditure of public funds."<sup>128</sup>

Kessler's mastery of comprehensive city beautiful planning techniques, is illustrated by his specific placement of boulevards and drives. That they serve more functions than just drives in the parks and along the rivers:

So far as the land surfaces of the entire parkway are concerned, the most important result comes from the establishment of the boulevards and park drives along the shores on both sides of the streams. These drives must be placed along the line of the private properties, thus dividing them from the public lands along the rivers. Thus there will be created an entirely new base for fine residence improvements facing upon the streams.

126 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 13

127 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 39

128 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 40

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By taking advantage of the new and beautiful surroundings of the river parkways, there will be established through this very simple scheme of improvement at least fifteen additional miles of high-class residential frontage, creating out of the worst conditions the very best of residential property.<sup>129</sup>

Again, Kessler's bigger vision and transportation plan in a beautiful city is shown by his intent for the parkways:

As a further result of such improvements, your tax duplicate will immediately show greatly enhanced valuations of properties fronting upon the parkways and will add materially to the values of all the properties in the region nearby. In turn, these river parkways become the most important link in the chain of pleasure highways surrounding the city and by means of their beautiful roads will tie together every residential district with the other and all of them with the business center.<sup>130</sup>

Though Kessler was already a nationally known landscape architect, the Park Board, in presenting Kessler's Report and Plan, describes them as elaborate and far-reaching, and are evidently made with full faith in the future growth and greatness of our city. He has not planned for a stand-still city---we would not have him do that. But he feels he has not planned beyond our ability to perform, and that, too, without burdening our people, if the work is wisely undertaken; distributing equitably the cost on this generation and the one which follow it.<sup>131</sup>

Kessler's system plan, connecting the nine miles of rivers running through the town via parkways and boulevards illustrates his expertise in identifying a city's unique features and then using them to unify the city. Even before he was hired, Kessler told the members of the Fort Wayne Commercial Club that they had the "opportunity of creating the finest city in the country," and that other cities "would be willing to spend vast sums of money to secure what you already possess: three large streams radiating to every part of your city from a central point." He continued that "a pleasant water surface is an absolute essential to every park scheme, and you can have almost unlimited water surface." He pushed the members to "purchase every foot of the river banks on both sides and then proceed as you have started with a well defined plan."<sup>132</sup>

The 1912 Kessler Park and Boulevard System for Fort Wayne, Indiana is the articulation of the 'Ideal' plan for Fort Wayne to become a modern, civic city. The plan includes Present Parks and Parkway, Proposed Parks and Parkway

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129 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 43

130 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 43

131 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 13

132 *The Fort Wayne News*, 'Another Expert Gives Good Advice,' September 13, 1910

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and Proposed Boulevards.

Present Parks and Parkways:

The parks that existed in Fort Wayne, according to Kessler's Plan, are the east half of Swinney Park, a larger (expanded to the south) Lawton Park, three somewhat equal length (north to south) sections of Lakeside Park, Weisser, Old Fort, Hayden, McCulloch and Reservoir Parks. The rectangular green space east of Clinton in present day Headwaters Park still exists. New additions to the park space include Rockhill Park and a triangular Williams Park. A large addition of parkland appears on the north bank of the St. Mary's River, across from Guldlin Playground. It is has been known as Bloomingdale Park. The park contains all land east of present day Sherman Street and south of the Lakeshore and Michigan Southern Railway rail track. This park extends east to almost Wells Street, where a short proposed extension finishes the link.

There are only two lengths of existing parkway. The parkway includes the river, its bank, public green space along the bank, the vehicular drive along the 'landside' of the greenspace, and the right-of-way, including the 'parking' adjacent to the residential lot across the drive. One of the existing parkways is the very narrow green space identified in Robinson's Plan that extends along the east bank of the St. Joseph River south from Tennessee Boulevard to link to the Maumee River at its confluence. The parkway then turns eastward along its north bank through present day Edgewater Avenue where a proposed wider extension links it to Anthony Boulevard.

The other existing parkway is associated with Thieme Drive, along the east bank of the St. Mary's River, extending south from Main Street to Swinney Park. This drive and green space includes a designed, and constructed overlook, financed by Theodore F. Thieme, founder of the Wayne Knitting Mills. The site was intended to demonstrate the beautification of the riverbanks. The overlook and site were designed by George E. Kessler, prior to his being employed in Fort Wayne in 1911. He was commissioned to prepare "a plan for the Thieme improvement and for the completion of the driveway into Swinney Park."<sup>133</sup> The public was so appreciative of Mr. Thieme's "liberality and fine public spirit," that money was collected for the design and construction of a bronze tablet to express their gratitude. The bronze tablet was designed by sculptor J. M. Korbel. The original design typifies

Opportunity; first dormant, and then awakened to possibilities, as has been the case with Fort Wayne in its movement for a more beautiful city. Upon either side of the central shield is a half recumbent female figure. To the left, is natural beauty along the rivers of Fort Wayne, symbolized by a sleeping girl clasping the shield of

<sup>133</sup> Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 25

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Art. At the right, is natural beauty awakened and bearing in her hand the laurel, the symbol of Art and Culture. In a narrow panel upon either side of the tablet is the palm.<sup>134</sup>

Proposed Parks and Parkways:

Kessler's proposed additions to the existing parkland can be divided into three groups; expansion of existing large parks, acquisition of future large parks, and the development of the parkways. The expansion and acquisition of the large parks is discussed in *Historic Context #2: The Green Lungs of the City---the Park Resources*; the parkways, as a combined transportation, park and recreation component are addressed here.

A review of the proposed Kessler plan shows that there is no additional unconnected park space placed in residential districts. The plan instead shows the entire length of river bank, on either side, to be converted to public parkway. And, rather than narrow parallel strips of green, Kessler uses his skills to expand the parkland so that, where possible, the width varies so that each view, 'coming or going' or across the waterway is different and constantly changing. He boldly proposes:

That the river frontages may be preserved for public use and enjoyment, and that existing parks may be connected and made an integral part of the general system, and that needed areas may be provided in those sections now inadequately served, it is intended to use practically all of the shore lines along the St. Mary's, the St. Joseph and the Maumee rivers.<sup>135</sup>

The three parkways are the St. Mary's, the St. Joseph and the Maumee. The St. Mary's Parkway begins at the Stellhorn bridge, as Robinson had proposed, and extends north to Swinney Park and then continues to its confluence with the St. Joseph river.

The St. Joseph Parkway is "a strip of land along each bank of the St. Joseph river from the northern limits to Three Rivers Park (a central park proposed at the headwaters of the Maumee). For the most part, this strip will be only of sufficient width to accommodate the regulation roadway and sidewalk space . . ." <sup>136</sup>

The proposed Maumee Parkway again illustrates Kessler's skill in design. Taking into account that the Nickel Plate rail line provides a rail entrance (today's gateway experience) into the city from the eastside, Kessler proposes that all

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134 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 25

135 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 44

136 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 49

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of the riverbank north of the railroad tracks be put into a parkway. Much of the land, he says is “covered with woods and the entire property is well adapted for a large park and with its development, nearly a mile of park will be presented to incoming passengers on the Nickel Plate railroad.”<sup>137</sup>

Kessler says that his proposals are the “least burden your community should be content to assume.” He goes on to say that with the growth of the city, “As the proposed lines, however, are followed out, others will naturally suggest themselves, and be more readily appreciated with the extension of the city, growth of population and demand for more space.”<sup>138</sup>

Proposed Boulevards:

Kessler’s boulevards are as equal of a component of the system as the parks and parkways. He says that:

As valuable as this park system will become to the city of Fort Wayne, the segregated, detached park lands which serve locally the several districts in which they lie, do not realize their full value unless properly connected by an encircling and connecting scheme of boulevards. Reference to the general plan shows a complete boulevard scheme and demonstrates how, without extraordinary cost these may be established, tying directly all the parks and river fronts with the several residence and business districts of the city.<sup>139</sup>

There are eleven boulevards proposed on the Kessler plan. They are:

1. Rudisill Boulevard, from the St. Mary’s Parkway east to Walton Avenue (present day Anthony Boulevard).
2. Anthony Boulevard from Rudisill Boulevard north to State Avenue.
3. Pfeiffer Boulevard running along State and Pfeiffer Avenue from Anthony Boulevard to the St. Joseph river and continuing to Brookside Avenue.
4. Kekionga Boulevard on the northwest side of the city, running south along Gertrude and Tyler avenue and Davis street from Pfeiffer Boulevard to Main Street.
5. Brookside Boulevard, also on the northwest side of the city, running along Brookside and Morris Avenue from Pfeiffer Boulevard to Ontario Street, prolonged west, and then along Ontario Street running to St. Mary’s Parkway.

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137 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 49

138 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 49

139 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 53

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6. Spring Street (boulevard) running from Kekionga Boulevard to Brookside Boulevard.
7. Cressler Boulevard running along the line of Cressler Boulevard produced west and running from Brookside Avenue to Swinney Park.
8. Hanna Boulevard running from Rudisill Boulevard north to Taber Street and then turning west to Reservoir Park, connecting both Reservoir and Weisser Park to the boulevard system.
9. An unnamed boulevard from Reservoir Park running west to the St. Mary's Parkway.
10. Tennessee Boulevard along Tennessee Avenue and its prolongation westward, connecting Anthony Boulevard through Lakeside Park with Lawton Park.
11. Berry Boulevard as a connection between the St. Mary's and Maumee Parkways.

Boulevard Design

Kessler establishes a 'standard' boulevard of 100 feet in width, from right-of-way on the 'house side' of the boulevard to the right-of-way across the boulevard on the 'other' side of the sidewalk. Within this 100 foot space, a forty foot roadway is separated from the 'parking' or sidewalk by a curb. Kessler further articulates the remaining sixty foot space:

. . . on both sides of the roadway there would be a parking or sidewalk space sub-divided into a sidewalk pavement not less than six feet in width, or better still eight feet, placed five feet from the property line. The remainder of the thirty foot space should be in well kept lawns planted with avenue trees on formal lines, the trees uniformly and properly spaced throughout the entire boulevard system.<sup>140</sup>

The key to the design and identity of the boulevard is in their uniformity and standardization among all boulevards, and different from any other road type. He goes on to say that:

In considering the question of boulevard construction and maintenance, it should always be borne in mind that these boulevards while they serve as fine pleasure highways, are in reality merely wider streets, uniformly and consistently improved, and as a rule maintained in better condition than the average residence street.<sup>141</sup>

The boulevards proposed to be 100 foot wide include Rudisill, Anthony, Pfeiffer west of the St. Joseph River, Kekionga, Brookside, Hanna, and Tennessee. Berry and Spring Boulevard were to remain their existing widths, the width of Cressler and the unnamed boulevard from Reservoir park are unclear. A non-standard boulevard was proposed

<sup>140</sup> Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 57

<sup>141</sup> Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 57

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for Pfeiffer Boulevard east from the St. Joseph River to Anthony Boulevard. This boulevard “should be at least one hundred and fifty feet wide in order to provide a center parking for street cars and two roadways for vehicles.”<sup>142</sup>

The large number of boulevards were a part of the system designed to [serve] “the greatest portion of Fort Wayne’s population with pleasure grounds as well as handsome park drives.”<sup>143</sup>

Kessler’s contract in Fort Wayne was for only a two year period, beginning in 1911. He was so interested in the possibilities in Fort Wayne, that he agreed to be the consulting landscape architect to the Board of Park Commissioners with no compensation. He continued in this role through 1921. He died unexpectedly in Indianapolis, at St. Vincent Hospital, constructed along his designed Fall Creek Parkway, in March of 1923, and was buried in his adopted home town of St. Louis, Missouri. Unlike the Indianapolis Board of Park Commissioners, who passed a special resolution noting his passing, there is no mention or acknowledgment of his passing in the Fort Wayne reports.

### 1927 Bennett, Parsons and Frost Plan of Street, Road and Public Space Improvements

The subsequent plan by Bennett, Parsons and Frost relied more on improvements---organizing transportation and extending roads—to Kessler’s Plan, rather than producing a new vision for the future. The Chicago firm of architects and engineers was hired in 1927 as the expert to “as soon as possible prepare a comprehensive street plan, involving the plan of the Circumurban road and all other corrective measures that should be taken in the city to straighten streets, to cut through streets, to widen streets, subways [railroad overpasses], etc.”<sup>144</sup> The City Plan Commission, led by Lee J. Ninde, its president, and Robert B. Hanna consultant, had sent requests to several companies for proposals for city plan work. Firms or professionals that submitted bids included John Nolen, Harland Bartholomew and Associates, Arthur Shurtleff, Robert Whitten, the Technical Advisory Corporation of New York, and Bennett, Parsons and Frost (BPF). The proposals were for a street plan and zoning plan, and many of the firms included a ‘deal’ or discounted price if they were hired for both plans at the same time. BPF submitted the lowest bid (\$8,000) for both plans. The nearest competitor was Harland Bartholomew and Associates at \$13,500 for both plans.<sup>145</sup>

At the same time that bids were being submitted for the street improvements and zoning plan, the City Plan

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142 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, pgs 53-55

143 Seventh Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 40

144 Regular meeting minutes of the City Plan Commission, August 11, 1926

145 Regular meeting minutes of the City Plan Commission, January 10, 1927

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Commission and in particular, its Consultant Robert B. Hanna were working on the route for the Circumurban. The Circumurban was the next generation of Kessler's peripheral boulevards. However, in light of the plan commission's intent to 'straighten and widen roads' and, the growing popularity of the automobile, it seems unlikely that this system was designed for (slow) pleasure driving. In 1926, the proposed route of the road was Paulding Road on the south, Meyer and Reed Road to the east, Stelhorn and California Roads to the north, and Hilegas, Sholtz, Hayden and Ardmore streets to the west.<sup>146</sup>

Bennett, Parsons, and Frost's plan articulates Major Streets, Street Widening, Street Extensions, Existing Parks and Proposed Parks. The existing plan however, is somewhat illegible, so all intents of the plan are unclear. The assumed written document, or text to accompany the plan remains unlocated at this time. The components of the plan that are clear include:

West Swinney Park, Memorial, Foster, Lawton, Lakeside and some of Franke Parks as existing park space. The large green space along the Maumee River, east of Anthony Boulevard remains proposed. The west extension of Foster Park to Bluffton and a proposed Circumurban also remains proposed as does an irregular strip of park land along the east and west banks of the St. Mary's river beginning at the north end of Foster Park and ending at the Wabash Railroad line. The plan proposes a widened strip of parkland along both banks of the St. Joseph River. A new addition to the plan is a proposed green way along Spy Run, running west past Franke Park. The confluence of the two rivers appears to be parkland, as does all of the Guldlin Playground oxbow. The land currently known as Headwaters Park remains compartmentalized with two rectangular green spaces. Street extensions appear to have not been implemented.

The Circumurban included in the plan is figuratively a huge square around the city, with the southwest corner cut off as the Circumurban tries to connect to Foster Park. The west side of the square is Ardmore Street, the south is Paulding, the east leg is Meyer and Reed roads. The north leg is unclear, due to an incomplete map.

The Bennett, Parsons and Frost plan appears to have one focus---enabling faster vehicular traffic. Subsequently proposed public green space is either remainders of Kessler's proposal if applicable, or almost haphazard placement as an afterthought, where relevance to the speed of traffic did not need to be considered. The plan, as reviewed, lacks a 'higher,' unified vision of an Ideal city.

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<sup>146</sup> Regular meeting minutes of the City Plan Commission, August 11, 1926

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**Completed Portions of the Ideal Kessler Plan and Its Subsequent *Improvement* by Bennett, Parsons and Frost**

Kessler's proposed plan for the city, incorporating the numerous attributes associated with the City Beautiful Movement was never completed in Fort Wayne; nor for that matter, was his plan for Indianapolis. The difference being that in Indianapolis enough and some of each of the components were completed, so that when one drives the system, or views components---bridges, boulevards, parkways---it is evident that they are designed components of a larger unified plan.

The 1949 City Map enables us to determine what components of the three plans were implemented before the end of our period of significance (1955). Of the eleven boulevards proposed in the Kessler plan, only two were completed---Rudisill and Pfeiffer (as State Boulevard now). Anthony Boulevard is partially completed. It appears from the platting of the city in 1949, that the other boulevards were not even considered, with the exception of Berry Street.

The parkway components of the system were also not implemented, with few exceptions. St. Joseph Parkway along both river banks appears to have been constructed. Moreover, Thieme Drive and Overlook are still extant, although the connection to Swinney Park is not evident. The large parkway acreage along the south bank of the Maumee, north of the Nickel Plate tracks was taken for the Fort Wayne Sewage Plant and the Wayne Tank and Pump Company. And the long time greenspace in present day Headwaters Park (originally owned by the Hanna family) was used for the city light and scale yards.

The Circumurban of the BPF plan was also not completed. The streets that were proposed for improvement to be the Circumurban still exist, although they remain disconnected. It is not clear at this time if Coliseum Boulevard is a completed section of the historic Circumurban way, although its eastern section and northern section are located near the proposed way. Of note on current city maps, is the existence of a small street along the west boundary of the Lindenwood Park Environmental Study Area that is labeled 'Circumurban Way.'

Bridges are an essential component in a city with three rivers. They are also significant monumental architectural structures if 'artfully' designed. Several concrete bridges were constructed in Fort Wayne between 1910 and 1930, and primarily designed by local engineer A. W. Grosvenor. In 1911 the county council, who funded new bridges, "put itself on record as favoring river bank improvement." The Fort Wayne News reported "councilmen felt that the municipality should park the river banks in order to keep pace with the improvements in the shape of handsome new concrete

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bridges which the county is constructing over the local rivers.<sup>147</sup> The Tennessee Boulevard Bridge is an example of a significant designed structure.

The period of significance for transportation resources is 1600 to 1955 because of the evolution of the transportation network from the first known records of European contact with Native Americans to the NPS regulated fifty year limit for significant resources. In the focus of this document---the development of the park and boulevard system---the period of significance begins in 1824 with the first platting of the 'city' as an organized space in the wilderness. That plat was 'laid upon' the existing transportation network---the rivers, paths and dirt trails---to build a village, town and eventual city. Kessler's Plan ideally defined that city, and it has been history ever since.

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<sup>147</sup> *The Fort Wayne News*, September 7, 1911, and September 9, 1911.

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## Historic Context #2: The Green Lungs of the City-Park Resources 1850-1955

### Introduction

In a civilized world, man becomes an ally of Nature and realizes the benefits---far greater than the sum---of working with Mother Nature, rather than conquering her. In the centuries leading up to the modern United States of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, man relied on Mother Nature for sustenance, shelter, and trade. So much so, that the once thought endless natural bounty was finally being realized as limited, if not endangered. Once limitless, and therefore valueless resources such as clean water, clean air, trees for shade and cool breezes, and open green space for quiet, peaceful contemplation and respite were becoming scarce and therefore priceless.

At the same time, scientific advances accompanying the Industrial Revolution, added new value to the once limitless resources. For centuries, it was known that waste-fouled water bore disease and death. New technology added knowledge of the tree's value for cleaning polluted air; sunlight's value for killing 'germs' in residential districts; and a cool breeze's value for moving fouled air out of the homes of the residents and all of the districts where they lived, worked, conducted business and socialized with neighbors, friends and family.

Added to these new discoveries was the realization that contact with nature---to see, feel, touch, hear, smell, and freely wander or repose within the trees or open meadow, on the stream or along the riverbank, or in the quiet open green spaces of park land to experience the shade, the dappled sunlight, the birds singing, the breezes, the passing of the day, and the seasonal changes of nature's color display---provided the calm, the respite, the balance and the recreating needed to maximize work output for workers or business owners, their associated families and in sum, everyone.

The value of these resources in city and town planning was most realized by German educators, burgomasters (town magistrates), and engineers. The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century city planners, specified city districts (residential, business, industrial), a hierarchy and network of transportation ways, park and open space requirements, and even building height and spacing in relationship to the width of streets, to maximize sunlight penetration and the flow of air through the town. More importantly, the specifications were developed comprehensively with engineers, landscape gardeners, architects, scientists and artists among other professionals involved. Moreover, this group of professionals took into account the unique nature, character and identity of each planned site. The breadth of professionalism involved in the town planning ensured a plan that addressed health, sanitation, hygiene, transportation, recreation for body and mind, and social and political issues. It also brought artistry into the plan to elevate the functional to art and therefore advanced civilization.

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In the United States, at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Land Ordinance grid established a systematic, democratic, and organized system of land distribution without hindrance or recognition of landform or natural resources. This system, or a lack thereof of more regulation, coupled with a swelling population of native-born and immigrants, in a new and democratic country, where opportunity was limitless, resulted in the growth of some cities as first trade centers and then industrial/commercial hubs. It also resulted in sewage filled rivers and streams, polluted air from industry, tenements and slums for housing and a decimation of rural/natural land within city limits (with few exceptions). The wants and needs of the residents created a push-pull dynamic with the rural lands surrounding the growing cities. Push from the city center for more land to accommodate more people, precipitating in opportunities for land speculation, rising land prices and a growing need for regulation of city growth; pull from the residents to get closer to nature to escape the crowded, unhealthy conditions of the city.

**Parkland Prior To Designed Systems**

The addition of public greenspace as a component of any village or town plan was without challenge in the developing colonies and then villages and towns of the United States. Boston's Common was set aside in 1630 as a common pasture in the middle of town.<sup>148</sup> Later, public squares in or near the center of town---and surrounded by public buildings and residences---were gathering places for public discourse. The function of some of these squares changed and they were soon perceived as available space for buildings such as courthouses, schools, libraries or city halls. Others were maintained as open green space---for respite and recreating--- and persevere today. In the original plat of some cities, including Indianapolis, triangular 'squares' were planned for variety in the grid, openings for sunlight in high density residential sections, and again to offer green space as relief along the primary streets.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the pull of nature, was satisfied by several other unique means. The compactness of towns developed from earlier fort and post sites enabled residents to access the rural lands near the city limits with only a short walk, horse or buggy ride. Military training grounds from the Civil War and local fair or circus grounds provided green, open space and sunlight in planned locations. In cities and towns lucky enough to be built along rivers, runs, streams or other bodies of water, unspoiled riverbanks and undeveloped flood plains provided idyllic natural settings to soothe the mind, body and spirit. Early public works structures such as a reservoir, dam, or canal combined with their adjacent landforms to provide relief from the teeming grid of the built city. In addition, small 'city' cemeteries, filled to

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148 Anne Whiston Spirn in *American Landscape Architecture*, page 206

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capacity, were relocated outside the city limits, and the land of the former cemetery was converted to a park.

One of the most popular built places to reconnect with Nature was the large, rural Romantic cemetery. The rural cemeteries, so called because they were located on rural land adjacent to the existing town limits, were first visited to mourn and remember the dead. However, the comfort provided by the cemeteries---their peaceful, planned 'natural' landscapes, Romantic in description---brought respite and eventually recreation to the families who visited them. However, noted Robinson, if there were that many people using the cemeteries for parkland, a need for more park space was indicated.

The pull of Mother Nature from the growing cities and towns coupled with the relative cheapness of rural land outside the city limits enabled the acquisition of singular large rural parks to sooth the resident's spirit. In some developing cities, in particular Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Kansas City, and Minneapolis, the local government, at times moved by citizen organizations, initiated the development of large public parks or, in rare cases, a system of parks. 19<sup>th</sup> century or older primary examples of this early park movement in the United States include William Penn's Plan for Philadelphia (1682); Frederick Law Olmsted's Central Park (1857) and Boston's Emerald Necklace (1878-95); H. W. S. Cleveland's Minneapolis and St. Paul Plan (1872); and George E. Kessler's Kansas City, Missouri Park and Boulevard Plan (1893).

Central Park, in New York City, was the impetus, inspiration and defining example of a rural park in the United States developed in a city or town as a means to getting the people and Mother Nature reconnected. The scientific health benefits associated with the parklands coupled with their popularity for relief from the built environment is and was the basis for parks being called the 'lungs of the city.' The minimum characteristics of a large public park included forested acreage with a winding interior carriage drive, and a variety of natural open spaces and shady retreats for picnics, socializing and other passive recreation activities. They were quiet and peaceful, and they were typically located along a river or some other local, exceptional natural feature.

The early parks movement focus was on singular park development, whether by enterprising private citizens, or combined efforts with local governments. The private citizen, being much more enabled to swiftly meet a need and acknowledge an economic opportunity than the bureaucracy of a city or town, developed private parks and places of amusement for recreation and large social gatherings. Private rail companies deliberately constructed large parks outside of the city as an enticement to use their rail lines for access. Other citizens, with philanthropy as a priority donated parcels of land within the city for small park spaces. And, still yet, other citizens, with a vision, the economic resources, and the personal commitment to the future improvement and development of the city or town, gave large

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tracts of land (and in particular those with natural resources) for public parkland.

**Parkland as a System---The Green Ribbon in the City**

The coalescing of the necessity and importance of parks to the general health and welfare of citizens in towns and cities in the United States resulted from the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, in 1893. Here, the "Great White City" gave proof to the world that the former colony of England was now an equal to the great countries of the world. Her cities, as exemplified by the exposition, were and could be world-class in culture, art, and quality of life and hence, civilized. It also physically illustrated what a city could be---a unified, organized plan with calculated transportation, beautifully linked parks and natural features, a city center, and designated residential, commercial and industrial districts. The planners of the exposition included Daniel Burnham-the architect and Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.-the landscape architect. In concert with other professionals, they chose the waterfront of the city as the location for the exposition. The site combined the formal straight lines of the city with the curvilinear natural forms of the natural environment---marrying Man and Nature---into a unified ideal plan. The Exposition showed

- the city as beautiful---more than functional,
- the city as modern---using technology as a basis for improvements,
- the city as civic---a paradigm of the democratic Ideal,
- the city as art---by comprehensive design.

Charles Mulford Robinson was so inspired by the exposition, that he coined the phrase 'City Beautiful,' and wrote at least four books on the subject which he continually updated and revised as city improvements across the United States took form until his death in 1917. His speeches and presentations across the United States combined with specific commissions for city improvements (Denver and Detroit for example) and his published books led him to be considered the primary visionary at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century of what an 'Ideal' city could and should be. He referred to nature being pulled into the city as a green river:

1. Flowing from the green seas of farmland and forest to large lakes of green---the rural parks along the city limits of towns.
2. Providing a continuous connection, both visually and physically, to unique natural features were the unique parkways of irregular shaped open green space along rivers, streams and runs, whose 'landside' boundary was defined by a river drive commonly known as a pleasure drive.

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3. Linking the three districts (business, residential, industrial) of the city together in a circumferential line of communication were the orderly and straight boulevards bounded by generous widths of green 'parking' planted with a rhythmic row or double-row of shade trees. Neither a river drive or 'through' (thoroughfares) street, the boulevards combined the experience of the pleasure drive with the economy of perimeter routes to offer a completely different driving experience and serve a unique function.
4. The green river narrowed to a stream along the minor or residential streets where smaller parkings extended the green space and less formal tree plantings into each street.<sup>149</sup>

The shaded residential streets and sidewalks enabled a pleasant walk to trolley or interurban stop or the green 'pond' of the neighborhood park. Within a quarter mile of each residence, the playground provided open space and recreation equipment for building body and mind. In some locations, the church-park or school-park not only provided the formal setting for the built structure(s), but increased acreage built social skills, while improving the body and mind through supervised activities for young and old.

Green 'streams' eddied at entrances of subdivisions where they visually communicated the entrance into a different experience---a residential district---where people lived, not worked. They flowed through the grander subdivisions where precious land was used for esplanades or 'private parks,' rather than increased numbers of residential lots. The rivers of green came up to the front doors of the home where deep setbacks and fenceless front yards extended the perception and view of Nature from the window and front porch across and down the street. The informal green eddies along the front foundation of the residence enhanced the setting of the home to present the best public image of the 'cultured' resident within. In even grander subdivisions, where residential lots aligned with the natural topography, and roads and sidewalks curved with the land, the view---the visual connections to nature---from every window in the home, or each step on ones walk to and from their residence was different.

In the city center, the rivers of nature marked the importance of business in the business district by becoming formalized settings for public and commercial buildings without hindering the movement of people and goods. Squares, triangles and circles of green provided variety, relief and safety from the built environment, but not the quiet and peaceful repose of residential district parks. Statuary, sculptures, and historical markers artistically placed in the green spaces of the business district provided important reminders, connections and memorials to ones history and past. They also communicated the importance of the city to visitors touring the city center. Moreover, for the visitor arriving in the city by rail, formal green space or floral displays greeted them and provided the first impression of a higher-class

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<sup>149</sup> Robinson, Improvements, pgs 131-135

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city as they emerged from rail stations and depots.

In some cities and towns, the river of green extended into the industrial districts. Parks were constructed adjacent to factories where business owners and workers understood the importance of green space as a relief from work. Floral displays, band shells and tree-shaded turf provided recreation for the workers. Some companies, additionally, took worker health even more seriously by supporting organized sports and providing athletic fields for active play.

The rivers of green---cooling the city, cleaning the air and bringing relief from work-related stress---were enhanced by several types of specialty parks to provide a variety of types of passive recreation. Advancements in communication, transportation, education and science brought Botanical Gardens to cities and towns, where specimen plants from around the world were on display in either seasonal planting beds or conservatories. Japanese Gardens---exotic showcases of design, architecture and vegetation from the other side of the world---brought understanding and cultural diversity to the cities and towns. Memorial Parks, whose specific function is mourning and remembrance of fallen loved ones, enabled nature to provide the comfort and connection between the living and the passed. Moreover, Institutional Grounds, whether for orphans, the feeble-minded, or scholars young and old, provided large, private, sometimes fenced, parkland for the benefit of the mind and spirit of both the users and providers.

Golf grounds were also becoming popular at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Again, enterprising citizens built private golf courses in the flood plains, along the riverbanks of rivers, or outside of the city limits. Though private rather than public, they safely guarded the open green spaces from being developed and built upon, and at the same time, maintained the recreational function of the space.

Neighborhood parks publicly brought Nature into the residential districts and enabled swift access to her assets, particularly for homebound mothers and young children. A short time in the park was all that was allowed because of her daily routine, but that time provided comfort, respite, exercise (walking to the park), socializing and the continuance of the bond between Nature and Man that she passed to her children. Where planned and acquired, the residents traveled no more than a quarter of a mile to visit the park and its location safely kept the residents from crossing a busy street for access. Although first intended to bring the peaceful respite of nature into the city, recreation components---swings, outdoor gymnasias, wading pools, ice rinks, band shells, shelters or small pavilions were added to expand the types of recreation and extend the seasonal use of the space, while still providing the comfort of green space. As recreation trends changed, and the value of open green space dissipated with the increased need for active recreation, or 'cheap' land for construction of public or quasi-public buildings, or, a lack of funding or private donors available for acquisition of needed recreation acreage; the original, and still needed function and purpose of the park---

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to bring Nature and quiet respite into the city---was eliminated.

Many of the large rural parks, serving the entire city, rather than a neighborhood, suffered the same losses of natural features. They were now called Recreation Parks. Once forested park acreage (purchased because of the tree cover) became treeless because a large tree was in the way of a baseball diamond or other organized sport facility. Once open meadows of sunlit green turf used for passive recreation activities such as kite-flying, studying 'Nature' and socializing over picnic lunches were 'tarred' or graveled for the new type of parking---the parking lot. One by one, the trees, the quiet, the green comfort of Mother Nature went away.

### The City Beautiful Park System

In the City Beautiful movement, the function of a park *system* was to provide a *balanced* opportunity of park experiences *equally* to all of the residents, therefore necessitating a 'plan' to unify and expand existing parkland to meet this need. Balancing the system and providing equality of park experience was challenged by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century individual parks which were acquired through private donation and therefore located and 'sized' by the will of the donor rather than public need. Other early public park acquisitions that had been acquired outside the former city limits, where land prices at the time were cheap, were now surrounded by the growing city. These individual parks were descriptively named 'City' or 'Northside' or 'Southside' park, et cetera---until they were renamed for a notable person or hero. Some of the parks were already existing privately held recreation sites---horse race tracks, lake resorts---before city acquisition. Other large parks were located along natural resources---rivers, streams, runs, bluffs, valleys and steep hills, not to protect and embrace the natural assets of the town, but because development was prohibited because of flooding or steep elevation.

City Beautiful tenets would merge this disparate collection of existing park land with the identified natural assets of the local environs into a unified system plan that, through parkway and boulevard additions, would link all in a continuous loop system---the green ribbon---providing accessible parkland to the greatest number of residents.

### The Example of Indianapolis

A prime example of a City Beautiful park and boulevard system is located in Indianapolis, Indiana. Indianapolis'

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system was designed by George E. Kessler in 1909 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places---with national significance---in 2003. The brilliance of Kessler's design, using his training in engineering, design and horticulture; influenced by examples of the 'German way of town making' in his native land; and given full opportunity to flourish in the unique natural features of his chosen country---the United States---gave Indianapolis a comprehensive plan that elevated functional design to art. Moreover, the plan is still being implemented and celebrated almost one hundred years after its creation.

The proposed system as a unified plan:

1. Provided accessible and balanced parkland to the existing city residents,
2. Created a citywide opportunity along the boulevards and parkway drives for new residential development,
3. Conserved public land and natural resources within the urban setting,
4. Deterred pollution of the Indianapolis riverine system by keeping the riverbanks in public hands,
5. Allowed sunlight and air penetration into the residential districts along the system,
6. Maintained a constant link for Man to Nature via views and viewsheds throughout the entire system,
7. And, used the existing natural features of the surrounds to create a unique cultural identity for the city.

The individual components of the system were multifunctional as well. They included parkways, boulevards, and large rural parks.

#### The Parkway

In its simplest form, the parkway was a strip of 'parking' including trees and controlled land cover (turf, shrubbery, groundcover, etc.) that connected a park to a park, a park to a boulevard, or one parkway to another. Included in the parkway was a transportation corridor in the form of a drive that separated the 'green' space from abutting land use. Adding the drive along the boundary of the parkway increased the length, and therefore opportunity, for residential development along its way. The objectives of the parkway were to "preserve for present and future generations some of the charm and natural beauty . . . to provide for the refreshment of the mind and body plus the well being and happiness of the people."<sup>150</sup> Hiram M. Chittenden, designer of the Yellowstone National Park roads, dictum for parkways was that, "They must lie lightly upon the ground."<sup>151</sup>

<sup>150</sup> Harley E. Jolley, quoting the Westchester County [NY] planners who in 1913-38 created the 'mold into which most [parkways] are cast,' in *American Landscape Architecture*, pgs 180-183

<sup>151</sup> Harley E. Jolley, *American Landscape Architecture*, page 183

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The curve of the parkway was a complex, engineered curve that slowed traffic, broke the monotony of straight thoroughfare driving, and enabled a variety of daily and seasonally changing views along the drive in both directions. Unequal and varying widths of the parkway green space on either side of the water feature added more variety to the driving and visual experience. The irregular landforms enabled opportunities for neighborhood-scale public or quasi-public buildings to be erected---libraries, schools, churches, hospitals---in pockets of open space along the 'landside' of the parkway. The classically designed public buildings provided a terminus for long views and, vice versa, views from the building opened to parkland. Some buildings were sited to maximize the view from the park setting. The varying width of the parkways also enabled neighborhood park facilities---wading pools, tennis courts, swings, etc. ---to be located where there was a need, and then be removed as demographics and recreation trends changed. Some parkway areas became so popular as neighborhood parks, that over the years, they were officially designated a park, and the true function of the space was forgotten.

The parkway served many other functions as well. Regraded and widened it aided flood control along the waterways; and dams enabled ponding of the water, again for flood control, but also to offer more variety in views, opportunities for water recreation, and places to bathe. Constructed walkways along the water enabled close contact to Nature in the built city. Moreover, the accompanying, continuous pleasure drives, once limited to the interiors of rural parks, were now available citywide to horse-drawn carriages, bicycles, and automobiles.

In the hands of Kessler, bridges spanning the waterways sometimes included in the parkways were beautiful Beaux Arts designs---melding classic design with the City Beautiful. Other public works structures---revetments, overlooks and floodwalls---were also designed to add beauty, that is, more than mere functionality to the place.

The public drive along the boundary of the parkway added much more perceived parkland to the user than was actually owned. Instead of looking at the rear yard of a household or business built along a park boundary, the view of parkland extended across the pleasure drive to at least the right-of-way in the residential front yard. The residential 'green river' created by building setbacks and 'parking' along the streets expanded and visually connected the parkway to the residential districts.

#### The Boulevards

Designed peripheral boulevards were based on the classic examples in Europe, where the existing bulwarks and fortifications of the city were taken down two centuries before, and the earthworks evolved into peripheral pleasure drives under trees that had germinated and matured. When the city grew to encompass the outer drive, a new 'outer'

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peripheral boulevard was again built in the less developed lands encircling the city.

Kessler created a peripheral transportation route to eliminate the necessity of having to go to the city center to get to the other side of town. The boulevards were a combination of pleasure drive and transportation corridor, with the exception that they were not thoroughfares that connected cities to cities and towns to towns. The standard boulevard design features that communicated their function and uniqueness---different than the through streets, residential street or parkways---included unique light fixtures, standard widths of road bed, standard widths of green parking on either side of the road bed, and tall shade trees in uniform rows or double rows along the sidewalks, again on both sides of the street. Rather than being lined with commercial establishments---as in the business district---their construction was meant to stimulate residential growth. Therefore entrances to residential subdivision, corners of neighborhood-based commercial, public and quasi-public buildings (schools, churches, post offices, etc.), or residential units (single or multifamily), were conveniently and typically located along the route.

#### The Parks

In producing a master plan for a city, the articulated parkways functioned as additions to the already existing neighborhood parks. If there were no existing large rural parks along the perimeter of his planned system, Kessler would offer suggestions for a general location for park acreage acquisitions. It is surmised by the author that this approach was probably to abort land speculation, but also to enable the city or town to grow as it would and then acquire the site when needed. Kessler did however accept commissions for specific---neighborhood or rural---park master plans. In Indianapolis, Kessler was commissioned to design the master plans for two of the three rural parks and two neighborhood parks. Taking into account the natural features of the sites, the two large parks offered different and unique recreation experiences. They all included loop internal carriage drives, a variety of shaded, wooded areas, intermixed with sunlit open spaces. Playgrounds, shelters, and tennis courts, among other recreation equipment were added to expand the types of recreation activities. The focus of one park was water-related, where the other was a formal sunken garden. His neighborhood park plans were formal organizations of the site to accommodate a variety of active recreation needs---playgrounds, toddler lots, tracks, gymnasias, wading pools, pools, play lots, etc.

#### The Effects of World War I on Park Development

World War I began in Europe in 1914, and the United States entered the war in 1917. On November 11, 1918, the war ended. With the exception of shortages of manpower, funding and supplies, little has been written about the war's

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affect on parks and their development. However, its impact on the way of life of German immigrants and their heirs living in the United States---on how they then lived, worked and played---needs further study. Study findings could reveal the impact of Prohibition (1919) and the effect on business and industry for German-owned companies in the United States. The study could explore the push-pull of the German and English populations, and what affect this dynamic had on the growth and development of a city. Fort Wayne, Indiana, being planned by a German immigrant and with a strong German heritage, would be an ideal subject for this study.

**The Great Depression and the New Deal**

The Great Depression of 1929, and the Dust Bowl beginning in 1932 and ending in 1940, were Man's and Mother Nature's catastrophic events in the 1930s. As a result, "the 1930s was a short but significant period of time in the history of design and planning in North America. Five Depression-era trends were particularly significant for landscape architecture."<sup>152</sup> They were:

1. A "striking change in attitude toward industrial progress" led, in part, to an "appreciation and conservation of both natural and cultural resources."
2. "Changing views toward the appropriate role of the federal government."
3. "Landscape architects were returned to public practice . . . in a sense, reestablishing concerns which many . . . had abandoned in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century."
4. "In this new arena of practice, problems requiring creative, nontraditional solutions were presented to designers, hence many notions of scale, materials, and construction were replaced with innovative approaches."
5. "Finally, since the purposes of public projects differed so radically from those of the 1920s estate work, the break from private to public employment led to stylistic freedom."<sup>153</sup>

The 1930s do not constitute a planning or design period in the same sense as those discussed earlier. Rather the period was one of social, economic, and political reorientation, in which progressive ideas of previous decades,

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<sup>152</sup> Pregill and Volkman, *Landscapes in History*, page 622

<sup>153</sup> Pregill and Volkman, *Landscapes in History*, page 622

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including those from planning, finally received official recognition and implementation. In both landscape architecture and urban planning, the 1930s were a period of consolidation and integration of sound ideas developed earlier. Specifically, this period saw rekindled interest in conservation of natural resources, in the concept of planned urban environments developed for the good of residents, and in design as a response to site and user conditions rather than solely as an application of historical styles.<sup>154</sup>

In 1933, upon the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt, to the presidency, “the public works and employment programs that were a part of the reform movement known as the New Deal went into effect, with an explosion of federal activity.”<sup>155</sup> Programs affecting landscape architecture were the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Public Works Administration (PWA), and the Civil Works Administration (CWA).

The CCC had two purposes. One purpose was to “engage in activities related to preservation and management of resources” the other was to provide “regular, constructive employment for men from disadvantaged families,” which then expanded to include Native Americans and World War I veterans. Types of projects carried out by this group included: fighting forest fires, rebuilding historic structures, and constructing park roads.” The PWA “was formed to resolve urban housing problems” and their work included “slum clearance and urban development.”<sup>156</sup> The CWA was created in 1933 and employed over four million people. The work included construction jobs such as “repairing schools, laying sewer pipes, and building roads. The program though was disbanded in less than a year.”<sup>157</sup>

Other agencies of the New Deal that employed landscape architects included the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Natural Resources Planning Board, and the Resettlement Administration.<sup>158</sup> The WPA’s key missions were to:

build or refurbish public facilities such as hospitals, airports and urban infrastructure; to help communities improve basic services such as education and public health; and to fund programs in arts such as the Federal Writer’s Project. The National Resources Planning Board organized planners to advise government agencies. Recommendations were made on social and economic, as well as physical, planning issues. The purpose of the Resettlement Administration was related to the early twentieth century Country Life Movement idealization or

<sup>154</sup> Pregill and Volkman, *Landscapes in History*, page 635

<sup>155</sup> Pregill and Volkman, *Landscapes in History*, page 624

<sup>156</sup> Pregill and Volkman, *Landscapes in History*, page 625

<sup>157</sup> David C. Hanson, *New Deal “Alphabet Agencies,”* <http://www.vw.cc.va.us/vwhansd/HIS122/Newdeal.html>

<sup>158</sup> Pregill and Volkman, *Landscapes in History*, page 625

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rural life. It sought to ameliorate the material life of farmers through improved housing, especially in new villages located at edges of urban areas.<sup>159</sup>

There were four types of work that landscape architects were primarily engaged in during this period:

1. "Large-scale planning, both for regional physical development and conservation of natural resources . . ."
2. Site-specific work included the "planning and design of national and state parks."
3. Design work in housing programs with an emphasis on "reformist attitudes in the city planning movement."
4. The development of small sites, "particularly those for urban recreation."<sup>160</sup>

**Park Development in Fort Wayne, Indiana**

**The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Parks Movement**

With the exception of Fort Wayne, Indiana's very long and unique early history and pre-history, its park development is consistent with the early park movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in other cities and towns in the Midwest. The original plat of Fort Wayne, as laid out in 1824 by Barr and McCorkle included a Public Square at the southeast corner of Main and Calhoun Streets. The 'square' though, was actually a rectangle encompassing one-half of the town block. That is, the square ran from the corner of Main and Calhoun, south to Berry Street, and then ran east to the alley bisecting the block, up the alley to Main and then west to Calhoun Street. The 1842 plat of the city also shows a public square, but by 1880, the courthouse took up most of the site. The small City or Broadway Cemetery was located where McCulloch Park now exists. Earlier cemeteries included a military cemetery associated with the first Fort Wayne and the Old Catholic Cemetery located south of the railroad tracks, south of present day East Swinney Park. For the purposes of this document, the oldest existing planned 'park' space is the extant cemetery associated with Concordia College dating to 1850.<sup>161</sup> It is located on the east side of Anthony Boulevard, across from the present day Indiana Institute of Technology---the former Concordia College.

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<sup>159</sup> Pregill and Volkman, *Landscapes in History*, page 625

<sup>160</sup> Pregill and Volkman, *Landscapes in History*, page 626

<sup>161</sup> B. J. Griswold, *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 406

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Lindenwood Cemetery, located west of the St. Mary's River, and due west of the original plat of Fort Wayne, was acquired in 1859 by the Lindenwood Cemetery Corporation.<sup>162</sup> It is also one of the oldest designed landscapes in the state of Indiana.

Other Rural parks in the 19<sup>th</sup> century include 'east' Swinney Park---the former Allen County Fairgrounds , and Lawton Park (1866, formerly the City Park and then Northside Park). In 1895, Lawton Park included two parallel internal drives, originating on the east side of the park at Spy Run as a single drive, and then separating, terminating at Clinton Street to the west. East Swinney Park included a system of curvilinear internal drives, bisecting the north half of the oxbow from the south section. The internal drives encircled the 'park grounds' to the north, and a lake to the south. The primary entrance into the park was at the west terminus of Jefferson Street, with a secondary entrance to the north at Washington Street.

McCulloch Park (1886), a rectangular neighborhood park along Broadway is associated with the adjoining General Electric Company. Squares, circles and triangles in both the business and residential districts comprised the remainder of park land. The parkland included Moody (1864), Hayden (1886, now John Nuckols) Parks, Williams (1889), and Orff (1892). Dewald Square (c. 1874) was located in the middle of the block, north of Creighton and east of Lafayette Street. Old Fort Park is considered the first park purchased by the city (1863), and is commemorative in type.<sup>163</sup> The small parcel is located on the assumed site of Fort Wayne, c. 1794.

Other parks that were added in the early 1900s include one Rural park, Weisser (formerly Hanna Park), and two neighborhood parks--Rockhill and Reservoir Parks.

### The Planned System

The need, necessity and lack of sufficient parkland in cities and towns increased as more rural land was platted for the three districts (residential, commercial, industrial) of the growing town. A report by Lawrence Sheridan in 1916 articulated and speculated on the status and future development of the American park system. Fort Wayne, Indiana

<sup>162</sup> Julie L. Kovacs, *The Cultural Landscape Report for Lindenwood Cemetery*

<sup>163</sup> B. J. Griswold, *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, page 465

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was included in the survey of 91 park systems in the United States. Additionally, Fort Wayne was in competition to develop a park system, and therefore increase land values, thus increasing the desirability for living in, or speculating on residential development. The Park Board researched other cities in the nation and region and reported,

Fort Wayne is in competition with her many sister cities within a radius of 200 miles. She cannot afford to allow herself to be distanced in the race for future greatness. Grand Rapids, one of these cities, has just voted an issue of \$200,000 of bonds for park purposes. Toledo, another of such cities, is about to issue \$500,000 of bonds for the same purpose.<sup>164</sup>

As a 'scientific' component of park system development, 'Modern experts' were defining the number of acres, and even square feet of park space to be allotted per person in determining park size and acquisition location. When Kessler was hired in 1910, it was reported that

there were 143 acres of parklands, and a population of about 66,000, meaning that each acre of park property must serve an average of 462 persons. Modern experts in city planning insist on one acre of park property for every 100 of inhabitants, which would require 660 acres for our present population.<sup>165</sup>

The Park Board also speculated that in a very short time, "health and comfort of her citizens, and especially of her industrial population, will imperatively demand four additional large parks of at least 100 acres in each, and well supplied with large forest trees, affording abundant shade, without which park areas are of little use."<sup>166</sup>

At the time of Kessler's report, the existing parks included:

Swinney Park	45.1 acres
Lawton Park	31.5 acres
Lakeside Park	21.0 acres
Weisser Park	14.6 acres
Reservoir Park	13.1 acres
McCulloch Park	3.0 acres
Hayden Park	1.1 acres <sup>167</sup>

<sup>164</sup> Seventh Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 21

<sup>165</sup> Seventh Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 21

<sup>166</sup> Seventh Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 21

<sup>167</sup> Seventh Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 51

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The Park Board goes on to say,

With the proposed additions to our park system along the river banks within the city limits, and the acquisition of these four large outlying parks, Fort Wayne would have a completed, well balanced, and an equitably distributed park system which would serve the people of a city of 150,000 inhabitants.<sup>168</sup>

Kessler's 1911 plan is, essentially, a map of the city illustrating existing and proposed parks connected by a system of boulevards and parkways on existing, new, and extended right-of-ways. In addition to the existing parks previously identified, large rural park properties were identified on the city's northwest, east, southwest sides. A sizeable park is sited at the confluence of the three rivers, and Swinney, Lawton, and Weisser parks show planned expansion. Ample green space is identified along both banks of all three rivers.

The planned park site locations are linked by proposed boulevards that were placed in the rural areas on the city's edges in anticipation of growth and for ease of purchase. Additional boulevards connected existing parks to the exterior boulevard ring. Parkway and drives that parallel the river corridors also connect park sites, and were actually aspects of a plan presented several years earlier by Robert Hanna, and expanded by Robinson.

While only small sections of the proposed boulevard and parkway system were implemented--for example Rudisill Boulevard, Thieme Drive, and St. Joseph Parkway—Kessler's proposed park locations, for the most part, came to fruition. The rural parks existing today include, the northwest Franke, the east Memorial, the southwest Foster, and the south east McMillen Park. Beginning in 1912, Foster Park was developed in its planned location and included a parkway that paralleled the river. A golf course was added in the mid 1920s. Franke Park was acquired in 1921, but farther north than its planned location on State Boulevard. Memorial Park was acquired in 1918 as a war memorial, but its location was slightly south of its planned river bank location because it was an existing golf ground that was available. As planned, Swinney, Lawton, and Weisser were expanded. Two additional park sites not included on the plan were developed later, but within its framework. In 1930, Hamilton Park was acquired. Its southern border is on Spring Street, an east to west oriented road that extends to Lawton and Lakeside Parks, and the northern boundary of the subdivision it was developed within is State Boulevard. A section of Spring Street was one of the eleven boulevards proposed by Kessler. Located on the city's southeast side at the eastern terminus of Rudisill Boulevard is McMillen

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<sup>168</sup> Seventh Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 21

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Park, acquired in 1937. The central park, the “most prominent and important point in the whole scheme”<sup>169</sup> was designed by Kessler and was to be named Three Rivers Park. The park was to be located at the confluence of the St. Joseph and St. Mary’s Rivers, and while the primary park was to be located on the north bank, all of the adjoining riverbanks were also to be acquired to extend the experience of the park. The focus of the entire park and boulevard system---the central park land---was never constructed. Years later, c.1927, Arthur Shurcliff was contracted to design a plan for the park. That plan remains unlocated.

In 1912, Kessler was also commissioned to prepare for Foster Park both a study for the entrance to the park, and a master plan. Another master in landscape architecture, Arthur Shurcliff was commissioned in 1916 to prepare the master plan for Swinney Park, including west Swinney Park. Adolph Jaenicke, the park superintendent beginning in 1917, made modifications to this plan. He was also responsible for the design and implementation of the Japanese Garden at Swinney Park.

Jaenicke was hired to replace Carl J. Getz, the superintendent and forester. Getz was originally hired in 1912 upon the recommendation of Kessler, that the city employ a forester to maintain its trees. Getz implemented several policies as City Forester, including permit requirements for planting or removing street trees. Additionally, he developed the list of acceptable street trees for planting in the ‘parkings.’

Of note for this historic context is his reporting of the tree plantings along the boulevards, in 1913. Rudisill Boulevard, from Hanna Street to the alley west of Thomas Street “is the first piece of standard boulevard construction attempted, and is a splendid example of how our boulevards will appear when completed” reports City Engineer Marriott Price. Getz describes the street plantings: “Two hundred and fourteen Oriental Plane trees were planted [in the above section of Rudisill] . . . This is the first complete section of boulevard tree planting carried out in Fort Wayne. It consists of four rows of trees planted along the entire length of the boulevard, two staggered rows on each side of the roadway. . . . Thirty-seven Oriental Plane trees were planted along Thieme Drive.”

He says that the Oriental Plane tree, “also known as the European Sycamore, was selected on account of its ornamental qualities, rapidity of growth, and freedom from tree diseases. . . . For these reasons they will be planted in large quantities in Fort Wayne as a boulevard and parkway shade tree.”<sup>170</sup> In the ensuing years though, Mother Nature, in her own way eliminates most of the trees. Getz reports that scale insects are infesting the trees, and there are no funds for chemical purchases to address the problem. It appears as if his yearly reports of the demise of the trees were

<sup>169</sup> Seventh Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 47

<sup>170</sup> Ninth Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1913, page 53

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landing ‘on deaf ears.’ In addition, in 1918 after two extremely cold winters that have killed two-thirds of the plane trees, he makes the decision to replace the dead trees with American Elms, and says that when the elm trees are a sufficient height, he will remove the rest of the inflicted plane trees. This may suggest also that the focus of the park board and its constituents regarding park land acquisition---in particular along the riverbanks as underscored by both Robinson and Kessler---and the purpose of parks were at odds. Many of the annual reports of the Board of Park Commissioners report on the progress of the boulevard construction, and the only acquired parks were through donation.

The 1911 Annual Report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners reports that [Fort Wayne] “has the best distributed system of parks of any city in the state, eleven in number, with five others now being acquired [by donation]. When these are secured there will be a park within a ten minute walk of the home of every citizen in Fort Wayne.”<sup>171</sup> It is not until 1918 that the park board and the citizens of Fort Wayne are jolted by social ills into actually purchasing parkland.

In 1913 the board begins to articulate the social responsibility of the parks:

It has been the purpose of the park commission to make the parks of Fort Wayne not simply pictures of beauty, but to make them active agencies of social service. As public places they perform a service and have an effect, greater perhaps than we can measure, upon the tired nerves and brains of the thousands of people who visit them. The park area should be increased to a proportion of one acre to every hundred of population. This would mean acreage of seven hundred, while now we only have two hundred and twenty-seven.<sup>172</sup>

And in 1915, after the start of World War I in Europe, the board begins to change the focus of parks toward physical fitness, and therefore active recreation facilities. The board says the “paramount purpose of parks and park systems, therefore, is to offer to all the citizens, young and old, ample opportunities for innocent pleasures and for such healthful exercise as will strengthen and promote the physical well-being of the participants.”<sup>173</sup>

In 1918, after the end of World War I, the park board says: “Physical culture, open air exercise, and health giving sports have a wider application in the training of American youth, if we are to develop and maintain a virile manhood and womanhood. . . . One of the greatest problems of our day is how to provide healthful, wholesome, and happy

<sup>171</sup> Seventh Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, page 79

<sup>172</sup> Ninth Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1913, page 62

<sup>173</sup> Eleventh Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1915, page 12

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recreation for the hours of leisure that a shorter working day is securing to men and women employed in almost every walk of life.”<sup>174</sup>

The same year, the first park acreage purchase in 52 years was announced with the acquisition of West Swinney Park, and Memorial Park.

Social ills and concerns bring new questions to the parks board:

To a large extent civic order, public health and public morals are purchasable commodities. . . .What will civic order cost? It will at least cost a Community House in every crowded section of our city, with its auditorium, gymnasium, public bath, class rooms, branch library, public lectures, private theatricals, moving pictures, community singing and supervised dancing. . . .What is the cost of public health and public morals? Largely the cost of public parks, well improved, with attractions so varied in character as to attract and please all ages and all classes of people, and supervised playgrounds, with play devices of all kinds, which serve to the child the triple purpose of giving pleasure, building health and teaching self-restraint and consideration for others.<sup>175</sup>

In 1921, Fort Wayne Parks included:

Foster, Swinney, Lawton, Memorial, Lakeside, and Weisser Parks, considered rural parks in this discussion.

Vesey, Reservoir, Three Rivers, Bloomingdale, Rockhill, Gravel Pit (Dwenger), Oakwood, Guldlin and McCulloch as neighborhood parks.

Camp Allen, Pontiac Place, Hayden, Klug, Bridge Approach, Williams, Old Fort, Orff, Hiron, and Hanna's Ford, as small parks or circles, triangles or squares.

In 1929, the only new park acquisitions were Roosevelt, Sieling and McCormick Parks. Further research could reveal the significance of Community Centers that were constructed in parkland as a result of the changing responsible of parks and government.

### **The Parks and the New Deal**

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<sup>174</sup> Fourteenth Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1918, page 17

<sup>175</sup> Sixteenth Annual Report, Board of Park Commissioners, 1920, page 10

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The city of Fort Wayne was an active participant in the Depression Era federal programs created to employ the jobless, the most notable program being the Works Progress Administration (WPA) created in 1935. At one time, 565 workers were employed by the City Park Board. Among the broad range of project types the program funded was the construction of facilities useful to local communities. The city began pursuing WPA financed improvements at the program's inception. In 1935 four projects were funded that included additions to schools, the remodeling of the armory, and the construction of a new power substation and animal shelter. As many as fourteen projects were funded through 1941.<sup>176</sup>

Recreational sites throughout the country, from national to local parks, benefited from the influx of New Deal dollars. The program funded a variety of recreational facilities including roads and parking lots, campgrounds, cabins, signage, shelters, and water fountains. The program's most lasting contribution to the development of Fort Wayne parks is the funding of the shelters constructed at Foster, Rockhill, Memorial, and McMillen Parks. The structures likely date to 1940 when the city received \$105,000 for park improvements that also included the paving of park roads.<sup>177</sup> National Register historian Linda Flint McClelland points out that "New Deal programs elevated the design of picnic shelters to an art."<sup>178</sup> In describing the efforts to design shelters with "dignity beyond passing fad or fashion," National Park Service consulting architect Albert Good wrote that

Beyond doubt the most generally useful building of recreation purpose in any park is a picnic shelter. It is admittedly no trivial task to achieve a desirable and unforced variety in such buildings within the confines of a moderate cost...Exertion of effort to bring character to a shelter, such as will differentiate it from a thousand and one others, is all to rare; attainment of the objective, without bizarre result, still more rare. The attempt is worth all the creative effort expended; the successful accomplishment is truly worth the praise.<sup>179</sup>

Fort Wayne WPA shelters display the rustic style of recreation architecture that includes a balance of timber and masonry. The parks illustrate two basic forms. Memorial and McMillen Parks have large-scale shelters designed for year-round use, and are more likely to be viewed as community or recreation buildings. They include restrooms, a large end fireplace, and side bays with doors. Foster and Rockhill Parks have open shelters. Foster is the larger of the

<sup>176</sup> Greiff, *Potential WPA Historic Properties in Indiana*, 2

<sup>177</sup> Greiff, *Potential WPA Historic Properties in Indiana*, 2. Greiff also identified park building construction in 1935, but an evaluation of aerial photographs shows the shelters were constructed sometime after 1938.

<sup>178</sup> McClelland, *Building the National Parks*, 405

<sup>179</sup> Good, Albert H., *Park and Recreation Structures, Part II*, 45

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two, and has interior and exterior fireplaces, exterior picnic spaces, and a kitchen. Rockhill is smaller, and has enclosed stone ends and open sides.

Other work done by the CWA in Fort Wayne includes work in Vesey Park to link it to Brook Drive, in the Japanese gardens at Swinney Park, and the stone ditch in Foster Park. The WPA is credited with the construction of the original ball diamond at Memorial Park.

Further investigation may show additional New Deal funded projects, for example the retaining walls along the river near Foster Park, and the masonry and concrete pedestal drinking fountains located at several park sites.

The 1944 Long Range Recreation Plan for the City of Fort Wayne, conducted by the National Recreation Association, brings the purpose of the former large rural parks full circle in their development and function. This plan defines a type of park called a *Large Recreation Park*. The report says:

This area is intended to provide the city dweller with an opportunity to get away from the noise and rush of traffic and to bring him in contact with nature. It affords an opportunity for the restful contemplation of the out-of-doors and provides a pleasant environment for engaging in recreation activities. . . . Each city needs an area of this type and it has been suggested that large cities provide one for every 40,000 inhabitants. . . . A large percentage of the park should be devoted to woodland so as to make possible different landscape effects and some sequestered sections. Part of the park should be devoted to open lawn, meadow and valley. One or more water areas contribute greatly to the value of the recreation park. . . . Whereas the area is intended primarily for informal recreation, small sections especially near the borders may be developed for picnicking and for games and sports of various types. . . . Parking facilities should be available near the entrance.<sup>180</sup>

Further research may indicate that Shoaff Park (1955), with a master plan by Arthur Shurcliff, may have fulfilled the need for at least one large recreation park.

The period of significance for park resources begins in 1850 with the establishment of the Concordia Cemetery, and ends in 1955 because of NPS date limitations. Almost 100 years later, as in Indianapolis and perhaps most cities and towns in the United States finding the balance of Man and his economic survival in the land, air and water provided by Mother Nature is a struggle that continues today. Although the 'Ideal' system is not yet completed, components of it

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are historically significant, as representatives of a component of the "Ideal." Those park landscapes include Swinney, Foster, Lawton, Lakeside, Memorial, Nuckols, and McCulloch Parks. Others may be revealed with further study, such as Rockhill, Vesey, Shoaff and the triangular Williams Parks.

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### Historic Context #3: A Better Place to Live—Residential Development

#### Introduction

For the purposes of the National Register program, the National Park Service defined a historic residential suburb classified as a historic district as:

A geographic area, usually located outside the central city, that was historically connected to the city by one or more modes of transportation; subdivided and developed primarily for residential use according to a plan; and possessing a significant concentration, linkage, and continuity of dwellings on small parcels of land, roads and streets, utilities, and community facilities.

In *National Register Bulletin: Historic Residential Suburbs*, David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland established the contexts for nominating significant examples. They concluded that the evolution of suburbs is related to advances in transportation that have four distinct phases: Railroad and Horsecar suburbs (1830-1890), Streetcar suburbs (1888 to 1928), Early Automobile suburbs (1908-1945), and Post-World War II and Early Freeway Suburbs (1945-1960).<sup>181</sup> The discussion here pertains primarily to those residential developments of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> phases of evolution associated with the streetcar and early automobile, which are thus manifestations of the City Beautiful Movement. Trends in subdivision design included the City Beautiful influences of a comprehensive city plan that linked the residential districts and associated subdivision development, to the business districts and large parks via a hierarchical skeleton of boulevards, thoroughfares, parkways, avenues and streets. In general, City Beautiful examples contained a unified “general plan for development, specifications and standards, and the use of deed restrictions [that] became essential elements used by developers and designers to control house design, ensure quality and harmony of construction, and create spatial organization.” The authors credit Robinson and Kessler with the impetus for the design and redesign of American cities with “coordinated transportation systems and residential development,” the improvements of tree lined streets, hidden utilities, and parks.

The swelling populations in the center of the city, coupled with polluted air from nearby factories and generally uncontrolled sewage created a need for more residential districts outside of the downtown city center. Clean air, sunlight, air circulation and open space in large residential lots were some of the impetus to move to the suburbs. This push of the population to the city limits was countered by the pull of nature from the adjoining countryside.

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<sup>181</sup> David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, *National Register Bulletin: Historic Residential Suburbs*.

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Robinson writes:

We have seen that vegetation is an important factor in the coloring of a town. Much more than that can be said. As appeared in the special case of trees, it has many hygienic merits. These are not merely physical. The grateful effect upon the nerves of the shade of trees in summer, of the bright flowers in parks and window boxes, of the rich foliage of vines, is so akin to sensuous pleasure that it slips indistinguishably into the realm of aesthetic charm. The urban vegetation makes us happy and does us good, until we hardly know which effect comes first. Calmly, coldly, critically regarded, it all gives color to city streets, softens architectural outlines, and so adds to city beauty. But, above all, the trees, flowers, and vines are beautiful in themselves and please on that account. We are children of nature, and it is a strange and pathetic thing that men should ever have thought that because of mutual dependence huddled them together into cities they must leave the country behind, foregoing its easily gained delights. For the idea is almost recent that the country can be brought into the city and made common property.<sup>182</sup>

Robinson characterized the countryside or nature as a beautiful winding river, calling it the *rus in urbe*. In a broader definition than that of a garden-encircled villa, he now associates it with the thought of:

tree-lined streets, of walks grass-bordered, and of flower-jeweled squares. Selfishness has changed to civic pride with a triumph of philanthropy and sanitation. *Rus in urbe* is no more an island. It becomes a river, flowing through all the streets and by-ways, and forming in squares and parks little ponds and lakes of country. . . . in the new picture *rus in urbe* means *urbs in rure*.<sup>183</sup>

And, in keeping with the tenet of Modern Civic Art, that stresses a comprehensive design, not only in the subdivision, but also in the broader perspective of the entire town, he says

In considering in necessary detail the opportunities for embellishing with grass and flowers, doubtless sight has been lost, to some extent, of the adornment of the city as a whole, of the aggregate effect. . . . The entrance of the country into the city we have likened to the flow of a river. Each beauty of a wavering line of shore may be noted, but when all is said the majesty and grace of the river belong mainly to the perspective, to the long view. So it is in urban gardening, in parking, with vine, tree, window box, the beauty of the single example is

<sup>182</sup> Robinson, Improvement, page 133

<sup>183</sup> Robinson, Improvement, page 132

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outshone by the beauty of the whole.<sup>184</sup>

Robinson identifies this flow of nature into the city as a unique characteristic of residential development in the United States. He writes:

There is an interesting expression, by the way, of national characteristics in the form taken by this private encouragement of nature in the city. Contiguous gardening and parking, which is so familiar in the streets of American cities, is almost unknown in Europe save where the latter is decreed by municipalities. [In Europe, gardens are hidden behind walls and gates---undemocratic] . . . The gardens do not blend indistinguishably into one another, and the lawns are not open to the street. That is the development left, not improperly to a democracy. American civic beauty gains much by this.”<sup>185</sup>

He also attributes this to another tenet of Modern Civic Art; the organized transportation system. “The change that is bringing the country into the city is neither in the heart of man, nor in nature. It is economic, even mechanical. The blessing which rapid-transit has conferred upon humanity is the mingling it makes possible of the city and the country.”<sup>186</sup> He goes on to say:

Beauty in cities, however, owes much more to rapid-transit than if merely the acquirement of pretty suburbs were thereby rendered possible. Transit facilities not only break down the old barrier between city and country by leading the city into the country, but they entice the country into the city, which is a thing to be differentiated. Rapid-transit’s first accomplishment is to widen the available residence area [by extending its lines]. . . . There results a decrease in congestion. . . . “Less congestion in the city, affords space for ‘flowers and turf’ . . . “The streams of country which is flowing through the broad streets, with all its attributes of welcome beauty---and with associations and moral influence worth more perhaps than is realized---has room to eddy around the homes. At once domestic gardening becomes an inevitably precious factor in city beauty.”<sup>187</sup>

Soon after the release of the Robinson (1909) and Kessler plans (1911) for the improvement of Fort Wayne, the form of the city’s residential suburbs took on distinct City Beautiful features. Residential districts began to display esplanades and parks, parkways with trees, ornate entry markers, and decorative lighting. In *The Improvement of Towns and*

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184 Robinson, Improvement, page 150

185 Robinson, Improvement, pgs 141-142

186 Robinson, Improvement, page 134

187 Robinson, Improvement, pgs 139-140

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*Cities*, Robinson acknowledged “new suburban areas are constantly laid out, and receive constantly more seriousness thought for their treatment as a harmonious whole.” A city should “see that the [surrounding] acres are brought into harmony with each other as well as the lots, [and] that all areas are made to conform to one general plan for the whole suburban property.”<sup>188</sup> In *Modern Civic Art*, he illustrated the importance of the street plan to “satisfy the demands of energy and labour [sic] with the least sacrifice of the reposeful character of the [residential] district.” Whereas in the business district, the organization is based on focal points such as the city hall or court house, within the residential district, there are no focal points.

The moment the residential area is entered, these ‘nerve centres’ become too distant to have a great influence. In their place the district contains no points of general command. Instead, a number of local, or neighbourhood centres [sic] would tend to have a disintegrating effect were it not that the business part of town still acts as a magnet, holding the residential area about itself with a firmness that almost balances the decentralizing attractions of these and the country’s spacious beauty.<sup>189</sup>

Robinson viewed residential and business districts as a “battlefield of two forces, one pulling outward and one in, and as one or the other is stronger there is overcrowding or roomy expansion.” Proper street location, a hierarchy of street size, and the beautiful transition of spaces between business and residential districts could resolve these problems.<sup>190</sup>

The writings of other landscape architects, planners, and civic activists further explored the City Beautiful aspects of residential suburban design. Professor James Ford tied residential development to the broader Progressive Movement by writing that in “the interests of both hygiene and public morality, the cottage home is very much to be preferred to the tenement dwelling” because of less noise and dust, the deterrence to the spread of tuberculosis [sic], the ability of mothers to supervise their children, available play and garden space, and the inherent “sense of responsibility” of belonging to a community.<sup>191</sup> Although he was writing generally on the topic, landscape architect John Nolen felt that the most important features of city planning were “the location of streets, the establishment of block lines, the subdivision of properties into lots, [and] the regulation of building and the housing of the people.” He summarized the essence of Kessler’s plan for Fort Wayne when, in 1916, he wrote that “thoroughfares, and other broadly related planning features, should be located first, and within these lines, and in conformity to them, local streets, blocks, and lots should be defined in the best possible manner.” He believed that, unlike Europe, there was fear in America of

188 Robinson, *The Improvement of Towns and Cities*, page 29

189 Robinson, *Modern*, pgs 187-188

190 Robinson, *Modern Civic Art*, pgs 187-189

191 James Ford in *City Planning*, John Nolen Editor, pgs 334-336

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“restricting or injuring free and open competition” resulting in more of a focus on civic improvements like parks and roads instead of residential areas.” In response to this thought, Nolen bridged the investment in the beautification of public property to the benefits of private land uses when he wrote “to purchase large public parks and to develop civic centers adds to the value of privately owned land and buildings in the city. Unsanitary homes are more bearable, and good class residences will produce higher rents, when they are adjacent to public open spaces.”<sup>192</sup> Landscape architect Lawrence Sheridan concluded that there were “infinite ways” in which a subdivision could be planned, and any design could succeed if it adhered “strictly to the basic principals” of community planning. These principles included zoning, the dedication and expansion of park land, forecasting city growth, and the correct size and layout of both straight and curved thoroughfares. Developments must fit the site’s topography and preserve “features of natural attractiveness.” Trees, entrances, lighting, and signage contributed to the development’s beauty, and small areas should be reserved for commercial businesses.<sup>193</sup>

City Beautiful and Residential Suburbs in Fort Wayne

Although it predates the Robinson plan, Williams Woodland Park is the city’s earliest planned residential community incorporating what would become Beautiful ideals. The development was at first a private park, established in the 1870s and located on the property of Jesse Williams, chief engineer of the Wabash and Erie Canal. Williams Park was located along the City Limits, east of Hoagland, south of Creighton, north of Pontiac and west of Webster Streets. The site became surrounded by stable middleclass neighborhoods and was served by streetcar lines to the downtown. Following his death the family made repeated attempts to sell the park to the city. About 1900, when the offers were refused, the property was subdivided into individual lots. The subdivision was constructed within the existing city grid, but is significant here because it was designed to retain the trees to preserve its park-like qualities, and incorporated development-wide deed restrictions to control building setbacks, and house sizes. The neighborhood was listed on the National Register in 1995.<sup>194</sup>

In September of 1909, just a few weeks prior to the arrival of Robinson’s plan for civic improvement, *The Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette* published a lengthy article describing the prospects of city growth and the availability of housing. Of current conditions, it reported that

<sup>192</sup> John Nolen, *City Planning*, pgs 22 and 40; and *Replanning Small Cities*, page 144

<sup>193</sup> Lawrence V. Sheridan, c.1930 speech titled *The Modern Residential Subdivision*

<sup>194</sup> Fort Wayne, Indiana Interim Report, page 184

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not more than two years ago, the great cry was for homes for the people who are coming to swell the population of Fort Wayne. While, at the present time, there is a greater demand for houses to rent than the supply can satisfy, it is also true that the solution of the problem has been met by the enterprising residents of the city who have realized that the erection of homes for the newcomers is a decidedly paying investment. An investigation of the facts shows that a very large portion of those who had planned to remain renters have been given the proper inducement to become the owners of property, and as a result it is stated that Fort Wayne today has, as far as can be ascertained, a larger proportion of homeowners than any other city in the land. It is a healthy wholesome condition.

It concluded that present conditions represented “the solidity of the citizenship” and the “institutions which provide the means whereby the workingman can only be reasonably sure of employment, but that that employment shall be of sufficient value to enable him to become a homeowner.” In a prelude to the grand plans for civic improvements that would soon challenge the foresight of Fort Wayne leaders and residents, the paper queried:

. . . what of the future? Out beyond the bounds of the city limits, out where pastures and woodlands lie, where the dogwood is gathered in the springtime, and the dog fennel lines the roads and lanes in the late summer, there are acres and acres that lie fallow awaiting the coming of the city dweller. And these tracts of nice land paralleling the city limits are waiting only for the takers, and the new additions that are laid out nearly every week testify to the growth of Fort Wayne.<sup>195</sup>

Although the city was growing in population and new home construction, the Kessler and Robinson plans did not specifically discuss the subdivision of land and how residential subdivisions should be designed. Robinson’s plan included a chapter on the condition of the city’s residential streets in 1909. His recommendations focused mainly on the *visual aesthetics* of residential areas. Residential streets should vary in width according to the importance of the thoroughfare. Utility poles and wires were unsightly. Alleys should not be included in future designs because they were unkempt, and promoted access from both sides of the lot, an unwanted characteristic of the tenements. Robinson did discuss the importance of building setbacks because “great beauty is imparted to the thoroughfare,” and “the appearance of great size and consequent value” are given to the property.<sup>196</sup> Kessler’s plan laid out the locations of the improvements of existing streets and the extension of boulevards into the rural lands beyond the city limits. His plan

<sup>195</sup> “Fort Wayne, City of Homes, City of Progress, and What the Future Has In Store For It,” in The Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, September 19, 1909

<sup>196</sup> Robinson, Improvement of Fort Wayne, pgs 50-63

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accommodated the city's forecasted population growth by adding the lines of communication---boulevards---linking the residential areas to the downtown business district and places of employment. The expanded understanding of Robinson's vision for Fort Wayne and other cities and towns in the United States can be found in his three books, *The Improvement of Towns and Cities or the Practical Basis of Civic Aesthetics*, originally published in 1901 with revised editions to 1913; *Modern Civic Art or the City Made Beautiful*, originally published in 1903 with revised edition to 1918, a year after his death; and *City Planning with Special Reference to the Planning of Streets and Lots*. A reissue, revised with much additional material, of the work originally published under the title of *The Width and Arrangement of Streets*, 1916.

The city's real estate developers provided the best illustration between the application of Robinson's and Kessler's City Beautiful ideals to the development of Fort Wayne's new residential neighborhoods. The promotions for Forest Park (a planned subdivision on the northeast side of Fort Wayne) described it as "the First Realization of Charles Mulford Robinson's Dream of Beautifying Fort Wayne,"<sup>197</sup> and that the Grand Boulevard Addition was developed "in conformity to our new ideas of civic improvement."<sup>198</sup>

Developers promoted escape from the unhealthy "smoke and dirt of city life,"<sup>199</sup> and amenities like "Country Surroundings" and "Hygienic Sewerage" that would result in "Vigorous Health."<sup>200</sup> Families "who wish to get away from the encroachments of our rapidly growing city, away from smoke, dirt and noise, and to get to quiet rest after business hours" could purchase a plot in the Country Club Estates, because "What you really do want and need now following the development of our city, is a pretty home in the suburbs where you can enjoy fresh, pure air and things close to nature."<sup>201</sup>

The developers used the proposed parks, boulevards, and parkways to promote their additions. Forest Park Boulevard was adjacent to Lakeside Park, and the Weisser Park Addition was "just south of beautiful Weisser Park, [and] just north of the city's new [Rudisill] boulevard."<sup>202</sup> Advertisements for the Grand Boulevard Addition went to great lengths to describe that along its north side for "Two Thousand (2,000) feet, extends Rudisill Boulevard, One Hundred feet wide. This boulevard when completed will have (40) foot pavement, (30) foot parkways on each side, (6) foot

197 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, April 29, 1910

198 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, June 20, 1912

199 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, May 5, 1911

200 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, June 25, 1912

201 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, May 16, 1912

202 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, October 3, 1912 page 4

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cement sidewalks, (2) rows of shade trees in each parkway and cement lamp posts.” Rudisill “will be the first Boulevard to be completed under the Park Board’s plan,” and “will serve the very best South Side property in this city.”<sup>203</sup>

Some developers included park space in their plans. At Woodland Heights, over 10% of the entire tract is set aside for Boulevard and Park Purposes.<sup>204</sup> Irvington Park residents enjoyed Vesey Park, a “city park with rippling brook and birds singing in the trees.”<sup>205</sup> Pontiac Place, the “First Fully Modern Addition” located on the east side of Anthony Boulevard, featured an esplanade park “1200 ft. along Pontiac Street” for “the pleasure of lot buyers in this addition.”<sup>206</sup>

Access to streetcars lines and the interurban was vital to a suburb’s success. Some developments floundered until the automobile became the transportation norm. The ability to quickly access the workplace from Woodland Heights was simply described as only a “12 minute ride to the courthouse,”<sup>207</sup> and was more eloquently presented for the South Side Suburban Place as, “fortunate is the man, who, after a hard day’s work in the city, can board a trolley and in fifteen minutes find himself at home amid the beautiful country surroundings and pure air of a desirable suburban residence district.”<sup>208</sup> The South Side Suburban Place was “close enough for conveniences, yet far enough for happiness and health.”<sup>209</sup>

Robinson, Kessler, and the city leaders argued that implementing the plan would increase land values. Houses and businesses on or near the improved transportation routes would gain value and offset proposed tax increases. For instance, it was reported that the development of the St. Joseph Parkway would “add largely to the value of the contiguous property.”<sup>210</sup> *The Fort Wayne Sentinel* reported that with the construction of the proposed Broadway Parkway and “handsome” new entrance to Foster Park “property values will increase rapidly on account of these improvements, and instead of fields and farm lands you will soon see city lots handsomely improved.”<sup>211</sup>

203 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, June 20, 1912

204 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, August 3, 1912

205 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, May 5, 1911

206 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, June 29, 1912

207 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, August 3, 1912

208 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, June 25, 1912

209 Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, June 25, 1912

210 Fort Wayne Sentinel, October 2, 1912

211 ‘Proposed Broadway Parkway and the Handsome Entrance to Foster Park,’ in Fort Wayne Sentinel, November 9, 1912

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**Residential Subdivision Design in Fort Wayne**

Residential subdivisions that were well designed using City Beautiful tenets used art principles for guidance in their master plan. Robinson describes them as

the three dominant chords on which is built up the melody of all art. They are unity, variety, and harmony. If our civic art will not stand its double test---first, the civic test, as to the urban good it does; and then the aesthetic test, it fails. And this latter test is a more rigorous requirement with civic art than it is with any other, for municipal art cannot stand alone, to be judged without its environment---and the field in which it stands is so broad to have unity, so varied to have harmony, so much the same in parts to have variety.<sup>212</sup>

The winding river of the country entering into the subdivisions extended down each street with:

1. the deep and consistent set back of the homes,
2. the fenceless front lawns merging together in the long view, as viewed from either the sidewalk or the front window or porch,
3. utility poles and lines running in the rear of the house or buried to not impact the views and natural setting of the fronts of the lots,
4. foundation plantings and small masses of trees and shrubs to provide variety in the turfed lawns and setting of the home,
5. Parkings---the lawn between the sidewalk and the street that would have staggered intervals of shade trees planted in them,
6. Wide esplanades, open spaces, or parks,
7. Shade trees for cleaner air, cooling shade, and variety of views in all directions.
8. Curving streets to invite mystery and variety,
9. Terracing or natural elevation changes to again improve variety in the landscape.

Each planned subdivision was further defined by unique entry gates and/or posts that signaled your arrival or transition to a residential place. Special lighting fixtures lit the sidewalks for evening or night strolls in the country in the city. In reverse, the linking of the subdivision to the larger green river winding through the city was actualized by the siting

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of the subdivision along a parkway or boulevard, or across the street from a park, where wider streets of green lawn and shade trees linked the country to the home.

By Modern Civic Art, the addition of nature in the city did more than add aesthetic appeal. Robinson explains the cerebral benefit of the green landscape:

The city which puts a bit of greensward on the public way before a house, and plants it with several rows of trees, adds just so much to the front garden of that house; and if, as if, as often now on newer streets, the trees be supplemented by artistic groups of flowering shrubs and by beds of flowers, the householder's walk home ceases at that point to be purely urban. It is transformed into a garden walk. Cares and work are left behind so much sooner, and the softening influence of nature's beauty calms the nerves and soothes the spirit.<sup>213</sup>

He continues with the importance of gardening, whether by the city or individual:

So far and near, in public and private, there is recognition of the value of gardening, for its own beauty, and as an advantageous setting to architecture. It is adopted not only because the city orders it, or merely because a land-owner sees money in it, but because the people love grass and trees and flowers. And the progress, as ever, rests with the people.<sup>214</sup>

Residential subdivision design following City Beautiful ideals were typically gridiron, radial, or curvilinear forms. Gridiron subdivisions, which accounted for the majority of City Beautiful inspired developments, were constructed within the existing grid of city streets, and continued the north-to-south and east-to-west orientation. In their simplest configuration, they are two-lane city streets with uniform setbacks, sidewalks, parkways, and possibly entry markers and decorative lighting. Examples of these developments are located along Fairfield Avenue near Oakdale Drive and Englewood Court. Variations in the form might include a central esplanade, like Forest Park, Kensington, and Northwood Boulevards, a small roundabout like Illsley Drive, or a slight curve, like Arcadia Court. Radial forms were also, although somewhat forcefully, placed into the gridiron. They typically displayed a formal and symmetrical layout with diagonal streets that radiated from a central green space. Lafayette Place is the city's best example, and has four streets radiating from a central esplanade, and the McKinnie Circle crescent. The interurban once cut across the development's lower half on Calumet Avenue.

<sup>213</sup> Robinson, Improvement, page 137

<sup>214</sup> Robinson, Improvement, page 141

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Curvilinear forms have streets that are primarily circular or “natural.” For example, the southern half of Harrison Hill has a series of arc and half-circle drives. Wildwood Park and South Wood Park have a series of naturalistic drives that make use of the changes in topography, a rarity in Fort Wayne’s level terrain. Finally, Indian Village was designed with a series of arcing streets centered on a broad esplanade.

Robinson describes a model subdivision in New York that is laid out in an artistic scheme with an accompanying prospectus for promotion:

An important part for instance, of the activity of the City and Suburban Homes Company of New York, is in the setting out of model neighborhoods. And these are planned in their entirety from an artistic point of view. A prospectus, which is a fair type of many, announces houses pretty in themselves, of varied but harmonious architecture, macadamized streets, ‘well-laid sidewalks, lines of shade trees, terraced sites, and a perspective of fifteen feet of lawn in front of the houses.’ Here is promised a ‘residential park’ on a small scale.<sup>215</sup>

The developers in Fort Wayne used the same tactics to promote their local developments. Design standards shared throughout a specific development were a means to providing an identity and visual unity using common forms. Minimum house prices established the financial class of the residents, and lot sizes were consistent throughout a subdivision. For instance, the Country Club Addition offered five and ten acre lots, while Woodland Heights offered “60 to 100 foot frontage.”<sup>216</sup> Building setbacks maintained the open, park-like setting between the fronts of the houses. The installation of sewers and city water showed the importance of the resident’s health. In Fort Wayne, the planting of trees was promoted to both beautify the city and increase home values. Robinson’s plan had called for the addition of a City Forester, and Carl J. Getz was employed by 1912. The use of trees to sell new home sites soon followed. Woodland Heights was “A Beautiful Forest Grove” and “No lot [was] without beautiful trees.”<sup>217</sup> Irvington Park was where “home life” was “made ideal among the trees.”<sup>218</sup>

In 1912 *The Fort Wayne Sentinel* reported, “real estate men realize it is to their business interests as well as to the interests of the city’s beauty” to incorporate City Beautiful ideals into the design of their developments.<sup>219</sup> Of these

<sup>215</sup> Robinson, Improvement, page 139

<sup>216</sup> Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, August 3, 1912

<sup>217</sup> Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, August 3, 1912

<sup>218</sup> Advertisement, Fort Wayne Sentinel, May 5, 1911

<sup>219</sup> ‘Real Estate Man Talks of Art of Creating New Residence Sections of Fort Wayne’ in Fort Wayne Sentinel, August 31, 1912

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developers, Lee Ninde appears to be the most successful in achieving this feat. In 1910 Ninde formed Wildwood Builders, a real estate and construction company, with his wife Joel and design partner Grace Crosby. Wildwood produced several hundred houses throughout the city, promoted residential planning, and constructed several subdivisions. They also published articles on house design and decorating in the local newspaper and in their self-published *Wildwood Magazine*.

Local historian Bert Griswold described Lee Ninde as a “practical dreamer” and wrote that upon his election to the Indiana Real Estate Association in 1916, Ninde surveyed the members to form the goals for the ensuing years. They responded:

heavily in favor of an educational campaign on the subject of city planning which was then something new and vague in the minds of even those who had given it some thought, while, for the masses of the people, it was an absolutely closed book...<sup>220</sup>

The groups efforts resulted in a 1921 state law allowing cities to establish plan commissions.

Griswold further explained that Ninde believed “in the beautiful as well as the practical” in residential design, evident in the hiring of landscape architect Arthur Shurcliff to design Lafayette Place, Brook View, and Wildwood Park in about 1915.<sup>221</sup> Shurcliff would later be hired by the park board to enlarge Swinney Park, and improve the street plan to include a drive from the park past Lindenwood Cemetery, Rockhill Park, Ninde’s Wildwood Park, and to the Country Club subdivision.<sup>222</sup> Another noted landscape architect, Lawrence Sheridan, designed Indian Village for the City and Suburban Building Company of Fort Wayne in 1930.

Robinson summed up the purpose of civic art by saying

For what higher call has civic art than to make beautiful the surroundings of the homes of men; to make refined, lovely, and truly lovable, that environment in which they have leisure for enjoyment or for misery, and where are reared and taught by sense impressions the children who will be our future citizens?<sup>223</sup>

<sup>220</sup> Griswold, *Builders of Greater Fort Wayne*, page 424

<sup>221</sup> Griswold, *Builders of Greater Fort Wayne*, page 737

<sup>222</sup> ‘Picturesque Parkway to Open’ in *Fort Wayne Journal*, October 10, 1916

<sup>223</sup> Robinson, *Modern*, pgs 204-205

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## Context #4: A Time to Play---Recreation Resources 1865-1955

### Introduction

In this Multiple Property Cover Document, Baas and Jones have specifically separated *Park resources*---the green lungs of the city---from *Recreation resources*---a time to play. While there is certainly an overlap in some of the identified resources, the authors have presented two separate context to underscore the importance and difference of both resources---their different functions, location, size, design, significance and history of development.

Civic improvement proponent Horace McFarland wrote in 1916 that the “idea of city planning is so to provide for a

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community that its members shall be constantly improving in their beneficial relation to it. Recreation is a part, an important part, of that improving relation, and it may easily be defined by simply inserting a hyphen after the word's first syllable. Re-creation, making again, renewing, restoring; in short, upbuilding after downpulling; such, in a community is the function of recreation.”<sup>224</sup>

Fort Wayne's embrace of Progressive Era ideals extended beyond the City Beautiful to incorporating the idea that recreation was an essential part of civilizing a city and socializing its citizenry. A 1924 recreational survey for the city defined recreation as “one of the most important functions of human life. It promotes health, happiness, good will, fair play, and tends to improve the spirit of neighborliness, good will, and loyalty.”<sup>225</sup> In Fort Wayne, this was most evident in the city's involvement in the playground movement, a national effort to construct playgrounds for the betterment of society through the betterment of children, and the provision of physical recreation facilities by public and private entities. The purpose of this context is to establish the significance of Fort Wayne's early playgrounds, public, and religious institutions that were active and significant participants in providing physical recreation.

### Trends in Recreation

Generally speaking, 19<sup>th</sup> century recreation was viewed as passive and psychological, represented by genteel drives, promenades, and walks through and grand views of, scenic landscapes such as cemeteries at first, and later monumental parks. As championed by Frederick Law Olmsted, exposure to, and the experience of, nature with one's fellow citizens was “civilizing.” In the 20<sup>th</sup> century these ideals were applied and expounded upon by City Beautiful proponents in the form of green, or natural, parks, parkways, boulevards, and subdivisions. Other recreational activities, often frowned upon, included mass public participation in the viewing of baseball games and movies, and the visitation of roller skating rinks, saloons, dances, and the burlesque. Fort Wayne also had the private Robison and Centlivre Parks, large day-resorts located along the trolley lines.

Simultaneous with the City Beautiful, and also within the Progressive umbrella, was a movement that viewed recreation as supervised physical play that socialized citizens, especially children, and was best manifested in the playground movement. That movement was a social movement rather than a design trend in landscapes. After the Civil War, when immigrants were moving en masse to the United States, the German and Swedish groups brought with them their love of fitness and exercise, particularly out of doors where they could enjoy the healthful benefits of Nature

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<sup>224</sup> J. Horace McFarland in City Planning, John Nolen Editor, page 139

<sup>225</sup> Fort Wayne Playground and Recreation Survey, 1924 page 1

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at the same time. Gymnasia—indoors and outdoors---were an important component of their recreation activities. In the 20th century, “a new era of physical fitness leaders began”<sup>226</sup> with the election of Theodore Roosevelt as president. “He recognized the importance of exercise and physical activity, and had the power to encourage the citizens of America to be physically active.”<sup>227</sup> That importance was underscored after World War I, when it was revealed that “one out of every three drafted individuals was unfit for combat” a statistic that was even more startling after World War II, where “nearly half of the draftees needed to be rejected or were given non-combat positions.”<sup>228</sup>

The Industrial Revolution also had an immense impact on the way people lived and played. People moving to cities for employment and perhaps a better quality of life had to adapt to a new daily and arguably yearly routine. The improved efficiency of the machines being developed enabled a new segment to be introduced into their routine---leisure time. ‘Scientifically,’ it was defined as the activities you do when you are not working---“to have freedom from the pressure of the tasks which brought only food, clothing and shelter.”<sup>229</sup> In 1929, the work day had been reduced from sometimes more than twelve hours to eight, some people enjoyed a five-day work week, vacations were allowed, and the number of legal holidays increased.<sup>230</sup>

Luther Halsey Gulick, president of the Playground Association of America, wrote in 1909 that “in addition to receiving the physical benefits that come from wholesale outdoor exercise and in the intellectual benefits that come from useful constructive work, the little children playing on the sand pile learn fundamental lessons in mutual rights. The older children learn lessons in the mutual relationships of sharing the use of swings, by having to play the rules of the game.” Children “learn that the social unit [of the team] is larger than the individual unit, that individual victory is not as sweet as the victory of the team, and that the most perfect self-realization is won by the most sinking of one’s self in the welfare of the larger unit- the team.”<sup>231</sup> The movement expressed a moral responsibility to better its citizenship. In a Fort Wayne speech by McFarland, he asked, “Where are the equipped playgrounds to make boys and girls strong, agile, graceful, and orderly? As for other recreation facilities, he will find the church about the only force for good, with the saloon or the country tavern usually doing a much larger business.”<sup>232</sup> He included that “land should be purchased with every school erected by the city. Thirty square feet of playground should be provided for every child in

226 Dalleck and Kravitz, *The History of Fitness* formatted as a web document

227 Dalleck and Kravitz, *The History of Fitness* formatted as a web document

228 Dalleck and Kravitz, *The History of Fitness* formatted as a web document

229 *The Leisure of the People*, page 55

230 *The Leisure of the People*, page 55

231 Luther Halsey Gulick, *Proceedings and Yearbook of the First Annual Congress of the Playground Association of America*, 1907, page 11

232 J. Horace McFarland in *City Planning*, John Nolen Editor, page 142

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the school. The child without a playground is getting ready for the hospital, the jail, and the graveyard.”<sup>233</sup> Dr. D. L. Drayer, president of the Fort Wayne Playground Association, concluded that the movement in the city “from the standpoint of importance, is only second to the management and maintenance of the school system. It will not only make for better bodies, but for better minds; it will save from a standpoint of crime, tenfold its cost; it will make the child happy; it will make him contented, and he who uplifts a child tenders an immense service to humanity.”<sup>234</sup> The 1912 Park Board Report stated that the “importance of supervised playgrounds is no longer questioned anywhere by people of intelligence,” and that “it has come to be recognized that the boy without a playground is father of a man without a job. It is better to train a child than to punish a criminal. Better crowded playgrounds than crowded juvenile courts and reformatories. It has been truly said that a town or city without adequate playgrounds properly supervised is guilty of criminal economy.”<sup>235</sup>

In *The City Beautiful Movement* William H. Wilson discussed the conflicts between the beautiful and playground movements. While both relied on the mantra of improving the health and welfare of the citizenry, it was to be achieved in conflicting ways. The City Beautiful sought to make citizens whole by the more passive “control over the definition of beauty and the manipulation of civic symbols.” The playground movement was separate, and “explicitly controlling and manipulative, for its goal was the socialization of youth.” Wilson explained that George Kessler, who would later acknowledge their societal benefits, believed that playgrounds could not replace the benefits of natural beauty, and their funding and employment of paid supervisors was at the monetary expense of the purchase and development of park and boulevard properties.<sup>236</sup> These differing philosophies are evident in McFarland’s boast that “Park grass is to use; not to see,”<sup>237</sup> and a two-frame Bert Griswold cartoon published in *The Fort Wayne News* that illustrated the difference between the park and the playground. The first panel showed a group of children in a park setting next to the traditional “Keep Off the Grass” sign. The second shows the children on a playground with chutes and swings, and a sign that reads “Keep the Grass Off.”<sup>238</sup>

In Kessler’s first report in 1911, he speaks of playgrounds:

. . . it is considered that all properties which admit of the various forms of outdoor recreation are in the truest

233 The Fort Wayne News, ‘McFarland Report’ February 8, 1912

234 Dr. L. P. Drayer, Donate Sites For Three Playgrounds, The Fort Wayne News, August 28, 1909

235 The Fort Wayne News, ‘The Fort Wayne Park Board Has Just Closed Active Year’ February 8, 1912

236 William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, pages 81, 210

237 The Fort Wayne News, ‘McFarland Report’ February 8, 1912

238 The Fort Wayne News, March 8, 1909, and ‘The Park and the Playground’ April 15, 1911

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sense playgrounds. . . . playgrounds should be not less than a block in area and should be provided with swings and apparatus as well as a rest house or shelter building and wading pools. In lieu of a sufficient number of playgrounds, which undoubtedly are as necessary in Fort Wayne as elsewhere, there should be urged a very material increase in the size of school grounds. These schools are all located in close proximity to the juvenile population and playground work as such can be carried out on successfully during the vacation period while the school building is not occupied. School grounds should contain all the requirements for a playground and with these there is no justification for the duplication of expenditures for separate buildings and playgrounds. The whole of this so-called playground work, which is really educational, should be developed and carried forward by the educational forces of the city and can be more successfully handled by them than by departments not organized for educational work.<sup>239</sup>

Playgrounds were not meant to be only for children. "Play for children is creation, play for adults is re-creation"<sup>240</sup> Playground design involved a review of a city's social makeup. McFarland wrote that a man should spend one recreation hour per day, and that recreation needs to focus on the "wage-workers." It was "axonomic that instead of city planning, so as to take the people to the playgrounds, the better way is to take the playgrounds to the people, to locate the community's facilities, for at least part of its upbuilding recreation effort, right where the wage earners live."<sup>241</sup> Planner George Burdett Ford wrote that "we should plot on a large-scale map the location, size, and land values of all playgrounds, whether public or private, and of all schools, whether with or without yards or playgrounds. In conjunction with this, the plotting of the homes in which juvenile delinquency has occurred, and the sites where street accidents have occurred for five years past, will prove illuminating in illustrating the need in sections now unprovided with playgrounds."<sup>242</sup> Playgrounds required fencing to control use when supervision was not available, to limit use at night which was a complaint against playgrounds, and to divide uses into boys, girls, and small children. "Swings, see-saws, giant stride, and an outdoor gymnasium, with bars, ladders, and rings, all have their places, though undue emphasis should never be laid on equipment to the detriment and supervision of "ring games" and exercises. On the smaller children's playground sand bins are almost essential, and a wading pool should be provided whenever possible, as it undoubtedly gives more pleasure and healthful recreation in extremely hot weather than any other single provision."<sup>243</sup> The city's 1924 recreation survey included definitions for play lots, neighborhood playgrounds, athletic fields, swimming and wading pools, tennis courts, and a minimum play space of 200 square feet

<sup>239</sup> Seventh Annual Report, Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, pgs 56-57

<sup>240</sup> *The Leisure of the People*, page 78

<sup>241</sup> J. Horace McFarland in *City Planning*, John Nolen Editor, page 145

<sup>242</sup> George Burdett Ford in *City Planning*, John Nolen Editor, page 362

<sup>243</sup> Arthur Coleman Comey in *City Planning*, John Nolen Editor, pgs 132-134

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per child.<sup>244</sup>

In Fort Wayne “the playgrounds situation” was simply summed up as: “First, the needs for children for play in a city of 70,000 people. Second, places to be made suitable for playgrounds. Third, equipment necessary for physical training of children. Fourth, proper custodianship of playgrounds. Fifth, municipal ownership and sustenance of playgrounds.”<sup>245</sup> Additionally, the city needed “no less than six sites, well located, for the benefit of the children.”<sup>246</sup> Playground development was financed through active fundraising. For example, the Guldlin Playgrounds were established in 1911 through the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. O. N. Guldlin. S. F. Bowser established the Bowser playgrounds on grounds donated by John H. Bass. The musical “45 Minutes From Broadway” was staged to raise playground funds, and featured local children. The Shop Baseball League made up of teams from local industries was established to raise money to fund the playground movement, and provided \$200 in receipts its first year.<sup>247</sup>

While the parks board took part in the early creation of playgrounds, they felt that “the trustees of the school city of Fort Wayne should as soon as possible take charge of this work and that it should not be left either to the park board or the generosity of private citizens. Our schools are located in crowded centers, where these playgrounds are most needed. They are evenly distributed throughout the city.”<sup>248</sup> A 1913 state law made the creation and maintenance of playgrounds the responsibility of the school districts, but it returned it to the control of the parks board in 1923.<sup>249</sup> In 1913 the city had four playgrounds: the public Guldlin, Holman, Bowser, and the private Robison. By 1924 only the Bowser playground was still active, but the local schools had assumed the role of providing playgrounds. Nine playgrounds were operated with an attendance of 75,720.<sup>250</sup>

Other public facilities played a role in the city’s recreational development. Sixteen public school gymnasiums were used as “neighborhood centers, and winter time recreation programs” and that “practically every section of the city of Fort Wayne is served by gymnasia owned and operated by private institutions, parochial schools, churches and industries.”<sup>251</sup> The 1924 recreation survey noted that “Protestant Churches and Sunday Schools of the City conduct

244 Fort Wayne Playground and Recreation Survey, 1924 pgs 3-4

245 Dr. L. P. Dyer, Donate Sites For Three Playgrounds, The Fort Wayne News, August 28, 1909

246 Dr. L. P. Dyer, Donate Sites For Three Playgrounds, The Fort Wayne News, August 28, 1909

247 B. J. Griswold, Guide to Fort Wayne, Indiana 1913, published by B. J. Griswold and Charles A. Phelps page 33, 202; The Fort Wayne News, May 21, 1910; and The Fort Wayne News, April 15, 1911

248 The Fort Wayne News, ‘The Fort Wayne Park Board Has Just Closed Active Year’ February 8, 1912

249 Fort Wayne Playground and Recreation Survey, 1924 page 2

250 Fort Wayne Playground and Recreation Survey, 1924 page 12

251 Fort Wayne Playground and Recreation Survey, 1924 page 13

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basketball, baseball, and other sports leagues, playing regular schedules that attract large crowds,” that Lutheran Parochial schools have basketball and baseball teams, and Catholic schools have an “inter-school league besides playing inter-class games.” <sup>252</sup>

Noting the relationship of the churches and schools to the Ideal plan of the city presented by Kessler; there are approximately five churches and two schools located on Rudisill, including one college. Four churches and three schools located on Anthony, and four schools on State Boulevard. Taking also into account is the fact that Kessler, as a design professional designed his plan using existing conditions as a base of information. Included in those existing conditions were the Allen County Poor Farm, The St. Vincent’s Catholic Orphan Asylum, the Indiana School for Feeble-Minded Youth, and Concordia College.

In 1928 George W. Alger writes in the *Atlantic Monthly*:

The Great Problem is to create a civilization that does not degenerate under leisure. This can be done only by setting in operation forces making for a culture that recognizes, as no civilization since the fall of Rome has been required to do, that leisure is and must be a means and not an end, that its true value is measured by what we do with it---by whether it lifts or lowers us in the great world of intangibles, the world not material, but of spiritual values. <sup>253</sup>

The period of significance begins again in 1850 when Concordia Cemetery was established. The early forms of re-creating were found in the green of the cemeteries. The period continue to 1955, because of the ongoing evolution of recreation components and trends. Guldlin and Shoaff Parks are included in the landscapes significant for recreation in this time period.

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<sup>252</sup> Fort Wayne Playground and Recreation Survey, 1924 page 16

<sup>253</sup> The *Leisure Of The People*, page 69

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## Section F: Associated Property Types

### Introduction

The focus of this Multiple Property Document is early twentieth century city planning in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and eight property types have been identified. Efforts to place the city's historic planning efforts into historical context requires understanding trends in the city's growth and transportation dating back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Therefore, property types 1 through 5 are presented here to assist this understanding, and in an effort to promote future study. Types 3 through 5 address properties related to the Charles Mulford Robinson 1909, George Kessler 1911, and Bennett, Parsons, and Frost 1927 plans for civic improvement.

Eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places is evaluated according to the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.

Criterion are:

- A. (Buildings, sites, structures, objects, landscapes) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, in this; or
- B. (Buildings, sites, structures, objects, landscapes) that are associated with the lives of persons significant to our past; or
- C. (Buildings, sites, structures, objects, landscapes) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. (Buildings, sites, structures, objects, landscapes) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

An eligible building, site, structure, object or landscape must meet at least one of the above criteria and possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

### 1. Property Type: The Portage

#### Significance:

The portage is significant for its role in the early development of the United States. It is the genesis for the city's location, and is a significant part of Fort Wayne's transportation history. Through river transportation, it connected the east and west regions of the continent, and was the center of Native American villages and white settlements. It was so

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strategically important that it was protected by a series of French, British, and American forts. Its discussion here is to help place early twentieth century city planning into a historical context, however the property type warrants additional research.

Registration Requirements: The portage is rich in prehistoric and historic resources, and further investigation would likely illustrate it to be significant under Criterion A, B, and D. It is also likely eligible for National Natural Landmark designation.

## 2. Property Type: Pre-Canal Era Resources

Significance: Pre-canal resources include archaeological and historical sites related to Fort Wayne's early transportation development. Their discussion here is to help place early twentieth century city planning into a historical context, however the property type warrants additional research. Additional research will likely identify historic traces, trails, buildings and structures.

Registration Requirements: Pre-canal sites include both archaeological and historic resources, and further investigation would likely illustrate significance under Criterion A, B, C, and D.

## 3. Property Type: Canal Era Resources

Significance: Canal resources include archaeological and historical sites related to the development, construction and use of the Wabash-Erie Canal in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The canal was completed in the city in 1835 and reached its heyday in the 1840s. Its discussion here is to help place early twentieth century city planning into a historical context. Additional research would likely identify canal-related beds and towpaths, locks, bridge abutments, warehouses, inns, and residential sites.

Registration Requirements: Canal era sites include both archaeological and historic resources. Investigation will likely illustrate significance under Criterion A, B, C and D.

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**4. Property Type: Railroad Era Resources**

Significance: Railroad resources include archaeological and historical sites related to the development, construction, and use of the railroad in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The railroad was significant in the city's industrial and financial development. It would play two important roles in Fort Wayne's Progressive era attempts to improve the city. Railroads were the major cause of traffic congestion in an era of streetcar, horse-drawn, and automotive transportation. Almost every early City Beautiful discussion involved the raising of tracks to improve traffic flow. And, an early baseball Shop League was created to help raise money for the city's playground movement. The discussion of railroad resources here is to help place early twentieth century city planning into a historical context. Additional research would likely identify rail-related bridges, depots, subways, offices, roundhouses, shops and rail yards.

Registration Requirements: Railroad era sites include both archaeological and historic resources. Further investigation will likely illustrate significance under Criterion A, B, C and D.

**5. Property Type: Lincoln Highway Related Resources**

Significance: Lincoln Highway resources include archaeological and historical sites related to the development construction and use of the coast-to-coast highway through Fort Wayne and Allen County. The route took it through the heart of the city, and past Memorial, Hayden and Franke parks. Its construction resulted in tourist, industrial, and automobile related enterprises being established along its route. Significant sites include bridges, right-of-ways, gas stations, parks, monuments, lodging, recreation sites, viewsheds and historical markers. Its discussion here is to help place early twentieth century city planning into a historical context.

Registration Requirements: Lincoln Highway sites include both archaeological and historic resources. Investigation will likely illustrate significance under Criterion A, B, C and D.

**6. Property Type: The Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevard System**

Significance: In 1909 the Fort Wayne Civic Improvement Association hired noted planner and City Beautiful champion Charles Mulford Robinson to prepare a city plan. Robinson proposed improvements to the city center, transportation network, the *appearance* of residential streets, and improvements to playgrounds and parks. In 1911, landscape

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architect George Kessler broadened Robinson's vision by proposing a park and boulevard system that capitalized on the city's three rivers, and linked existing and proposed park sites. His proposed multiple-lane and tree lined boulevards created a broad loop around the city center, and extended south and west beyond the city limits into the adjacent rural landscape. The result of the plan's presentation, coupled with the guidance of local visionaries such as Lee Ninde and David N. Foster was the acquisition and/or construction of boulevards, parkways, bridges, parks, residential subdivisions, and individual public and private institutions (churches, schools, etc.) along the boulevard system.

Registration Requirements:

Sites are eligible under Criterion A for their association with Fort Wayne city planning from 1909 to 1955. As a system they should be linked where possible, but there may be non-contiguous sites. Nominations should include comparisons of historic plans and aerial photographs, as well as a review of period municipal reports. Park, boulevard, and river sites are those identified on the Robinson, Kessler, or BPF plans, or whose existence can be established to be a result of the plans. Park sites will retain, or display the indications of, the historic features typically found in a Kessler era park (land use, trees, trails, roads, plantings, fountains, benches, lakes and river, bridges, etc.) The historic function of the site should have integrity, including the feeling of the place. One should know that they are in a 'natural' setting. Therefore, all senses should be addressed including the auditory levels of the place---that is, as a natural setting---one should be able hear birds singing and the wind rustling leaves. Additionally, the turf would be green and the trees would be maintained for shade and views through the landscape. Use the descriptive text included in this document to establish integrity. Some may not be individually eligible because of a loss of historic features, but still retain the integrity of their location and role as green space in the overall park and boulevard system. Boulevards should retain the integrity of location, width, and plantings. Individual public and private institutions should display architectural integrity and be associated with the boulevard system development. Sites are eligible under Criterion C as examples of works by master landscape architects, planners, and horticulturists, specifically George Kessler, Charles Mulford Robinson, Arthur Shurcliff, Lawrence Sheridan, and Adolph Jaenicke. Bridges are eligible under Criterion C for their significance in the field of engineering and transportation. Shurcliff's design of Shoaf Park in 1950 marks the final City Beautiful related event for the Fort Wayne system. Its ensuing development establishes the contextual end date of 1955.

**7. Property Type: Residential Subdivisions**

Significance: In 1909, the Fort Wayne Civic Improvement Association hired noted planner and City Beautiful

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champion Charles Mulford Robinson to prepare a city plan. Robinson proposed improvements to the city center, transportation network, the *appearance* of residential streets, and improvements to playgrounds and parks. In 1911, landscape architect George Kessler articulated the Robinson City Beautiful vision by expanding the parkway system that capitalized on the city's three rivers. His proposed multiple-lane and tree lined boulevards created a broad loop around the city center, and extended south and west beyond the city limits into the adjacent rural landscape. Boulevard construction, beginning circa 1912, opened new lands to development. Local realtors and residential developers, for both the benefits of the city and their business, embraced the City Beautiful ideals and incorporated its principles of harmonious design and healthy living into their projects. The initial subdivisions fit neatly into the city's grid. Other examples incorporated radiating streets and curvilinear street patterns. Subdivisions began to include open space in the form of parks and esplanades that extended the green spaces of the boulevards and parkways into the neighborhoods. They also incorporated roundabouts, tree-lined streets, entry markers, and decorative lighting and signage. Appearance was controlled with uniform setbacks and building heights, and minimum house prices. Lot sizes reflected the economic class of the residents. Houses displayed typical Early Twentieth Century styles, most frequently Colonial and Tudor Revivals, and Craftsman influenced American foursquares and bungalows. Most subdivisions were designed by the local developers and engineering firms. However, three were designed by nationally significant landscape architects. About 1915, Arthur Shurcliff designed the radial Lafayette Place and the curvilinear Wildwood Park. In 1930, Lawrence Sheridan designed Indian Village.

Registration Requirements: The Robinson, Kessler, and BPF. plans did not specifically discuss the development of individual subdivisions, but Kessler reported that planned road systems were for the city's residential growth, and that residential development would follow the implementation of their transportation system. Robinson articulated standards for residential district developments in his books. For registration, residential subdivisions should be designed, and at least mostly constructed, between 1909 and 1955 and illustrate City Beautiful and City Planning efforts in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Under Criterion A, they must have a strong planning or visual link to the Robinson, Kessler, or BPF plans, especially the connection of interior subdivision green spaces with improved boulevards, parkways, and drives. A further connection to the movement might be established through the use of planning reports, sales brochures, and newspaper advertisements that present a connection to the implementation of the city's plans, or the inclusion of City Beautiful concepts into the subdivision design. For Criterion C, residential subdivisions would display the City Beautiful ideals of harmonious design and healthy living in the form of parks and esplanades, roundabouts, tree-lined streets, entry markers, and decorative lighting and signage. The architecture would display typical Early Twentieth Century styles, but may include buildings constructed in popular styles up to 1955. Their appearance may be controlled with uniform building setbacks and heights. Some subdivisions were designed following Robinson's and Kessler's plans. However, their development took several years to complete. An example is South

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Wood Park, a subdivision started c.1915. Its six additions were mostly complete by the 1940s, but it was still experiencing some new housing construction into the 1980s. Therefore, the date 1955 is the end date for this context.

The subdivisions may also represent the work of a master landscape architect or architecture.

Representative Properties

Forest Park, Lafayette Place, Indian Village, and Wildwood Park Additions

**8. Property Type: Individual Public Parks, Boulevards, Parkways, Green spaces, and Recreation Resources**

Significance:

In 1909 the Fort Wayne Civic Improvement Association hired noted planner and City Beautiful champion Charles Mulford Robinson to prepare a city plan. Robinson proposed improvements to the city's transportation network that included a river drive connecting a few existing parks. In 1911, landscape architect George Kessler broadened Robinson's vision by proposing a parkway and boulevard system that capitalized on the city's three rivers, and linked existing and proposed park sites. His proposed multiple-lane and tree lined boulevards created a broad loop around the city center, and extended south and west beyond the city limits into the adjacent rural landscape. Sites for this property type include parks varying in size from rural to neighborhood, boulevards, parkways and drives, rivers and riverbanks.

Simultaneous with park development, several resources designed and constructed between 1900 and 1929 illustrate Progressive Era efforts to provide recreation in Fort Wayne. The movement was based on the ideal that a physically healthy populace, especially children, was more responsible and productive. These resources include playgrounds, and schools and churches where recreation was a component of the educational experience.

In the early and mid 1930s Congress created a series of public employment programs designed to provide employment, and create projects that were useful to local communities. In Fort Wayne, the Civilian Works Administration (CWA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) produced projects in parks, green spaces, and recreation properties. They are best evident in the city's four WPA sponsored shelters and pavilions, but also can be seen in the river's retaining walls and revetments.

Several of these park, boulevard, drive, green space, and recreation sites are individually eligible for the National Register. Some sites existed prior to any city-wide plan for beautification, such as East Swinney and Lawton Parks.

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Others are a component of Charles Mulford Robinson's 1909, George Kessler's 1911, or BPF's 1927 plans to improve and beautify the city. Additionally, there are sites contemporary to these plans and the overall Progressive and Beautiful movements that were outside of the scope of these plans, but still contributed to the overall vision of a world-class city. While not included, they played essential roles in the beautification and provision of recreation in the city.

Registration Requirements:

Individual park, boulevard, drives, green space and recreation resources are significant properties that retain the integrity to be listed individually, and were constructed between 1850 and 1955. They also *could* be a part of the city's broader park and boulevard system, but are significant enough to be listed individually.

Park, boulevard, and green space sites eligible for individual listing under Criterion A are the resources identified on George Kessler's 1911 park and boulevard plan, or whose existence can be established as being prior to or a result of Kessler's plan. The sites retain, or display the indications of, the historic features typically found in a Kessler era park (land use, trees, trails, roads, plantings, fountains, benches, lakes and river, bridges, sounds to be restricted to include birds singing, children playing and the occasional public music concert, etc.). Additionally, resources include park, boulevard, green space, recreation, and Depression Era resources constructed between 1900 and 1955, but were not included on the plan. These resources existed prior to the plan and were beyond its scope (playgrounds), or are the result of the plan's implementation (McMillen Park). Nominations should include comparisons of historic plans and aerial photographs, as well as a review of period municipal reports. Use the descriptive text included in this document to establish integrity. Due to modernization, little historic playground apparatus will remain requiring a thorough documentation of the patterns of use. Churches, schools, gymnasiums, and other related buildings should still display the recreational facility of the structure and site, and retain the architectural integrity. Sites may be eligible under Criterion C as examples of works by master landscape architects, planners, and horticulturists, specifically George Kessler, Arthur Shurcliff, Lawrence Sheridan, and Adolph Jaenicke, such as Thieme Drive and Overlook.

The 1850 development of Concordia Cemetery marks the start of this context. Shurcliff's design of Shoaf Park in 1950 marks the final City Beautiful related event for the Fort Wayne system. Its ensuing development establishes the contextual end date of 1955.

Examples:

Foster, Orff, Memorial, and Lakeside Parks and Bowser Playground

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**Section G: Geographical Data**

The resources associated with the four historical contexts are located within the following boundaries:

Historic Context #1:

The transportation resources located within Allen County, Indiana to 1955.

Historic Context #2:

The park resources associated with Fort Wayne, Indiana to 1955, located within Allen County.

Historic Context #3:

The residential subdivision resources associated with the development and growth of Fort Wayne, Indiana to 1955, located within Allen County.

Historic Context #4:

The recreation resources associated with the development and growth of Fort Wayne, Indiana to 1955, located within Allen County.

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## Section H: Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The focus of this document was to identify and evaluate the historic resources associated with the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana's participation in early 20th century city planning. Two primary documents were the starting point for this task: Charles Mulford Robinson's 1910 plan for beautifying the city, and George Kessler's 1911 plan for a park and boulevard system.

A bibliography search identified books and articles by period and contemporary authors about city planning, design, and the City Beautiful philosophy. The most important of these documents were Robinson's books *The Improvement of Towns and Cities, or the Practical Basis of City Aesthetics*, and *Modern Civic Art, or the City Made Beautiful*. Additionally, the Kessler plans for Indianapolis, and Kansas City, Missouri were analyzed. These documents were reviewed and incorporated into the MPD text.

A wealth of information was garnered from Cornell University Professor John W. Reps who has collected and edited period documents and made them available via the internet. These documents by noted landscape architects and planners such as John Nolen and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., included discussions about European city planning, especially the role of German city planning's influence on the creation of Ideal American towns and cities. Additionally, Reps' articles included works by several social Progressives, such as Charles Zueblin who in 1909 was invited to lecture in Fort Wayne.

Period newspapers provided accounts and opinions regarding local beautification efforts, and, in certain cases, assisted in promoting their acceptance by the citizens of Fort Wayne. Newspapers also displayed "beautiful" subdivision advertisements and promotionals that local realtors and developers used to sell home sites.

Period plans and maps were reviewed to better understand the city's growth patterns, both before and after the plans were accepted by the city.

The Indiana State Library and the Allen County Public Library collections held a variety of period documents that included a bound and intact Robinson plan, original versions of Robinson's books, and other original planning texts. The Allen County Public Library also provided copies of the Park Commissioners Annual Reports, and other local government publications critical to the document.

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The 1995 Indiana Historic Designed Landscape Survey, Phase One was reviewed for Kessler's Fort Wayne sites, as well as three cultural landscape reports from 2002 completed for Lakeside, Swinney, and Memorial parks.

A combined text and photographic inventory of the sites identified on Kessler's 1911 plan was completed in unison with this document, and included a number of sites related to the plan's creation (ie. playgrounds, subdivisions, bridges, boulevards, etc.).

National Park Service documents, for instance *National Register Bulletin: Historic Residential Suburbs* were reviewed and incorporated into the MPD. Local governmental documents and reports were analyzed, including park board annual reports, bonding documents, and the minutes of city council meetings. The National Register nomination for the Indianapolis Park and Boulevard System (2003) was, to some degree, a model for this document.

Advice was sought from national experts, for example Kessler biographer, Kurt Culbertson, FASLA was contacted regarding his study of Kessler, the City Beautiful, and the German influence on American town planning. Malcolm Cairns, FASLA, national educator for historic designed landscapes, contributed advice, materials, and critiques. Guidance, advice, input, and editing were provided by local historic preservation organizations, and local and state governmental entities.

The integrity of a property was established by applying the National Register Criteria for Evaluation where a site must possess the integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. This provided an interesting quandary regarding the city's park sites, some which have lost the integrity of their historic physical resources (roads, fountains, plantings, etc.), but maintained its role and function as a greenspace within the system. It was determined that a park site might have lost its individual integrity, but was eligible only as a component of a Fort Wayne, Indiana plan for a park and boulevard *system*.

Registration criteria was determined by using descriptive text from the writings of Kessler, Nolen, Olmsted, Sr. & Jr. and Robinson.

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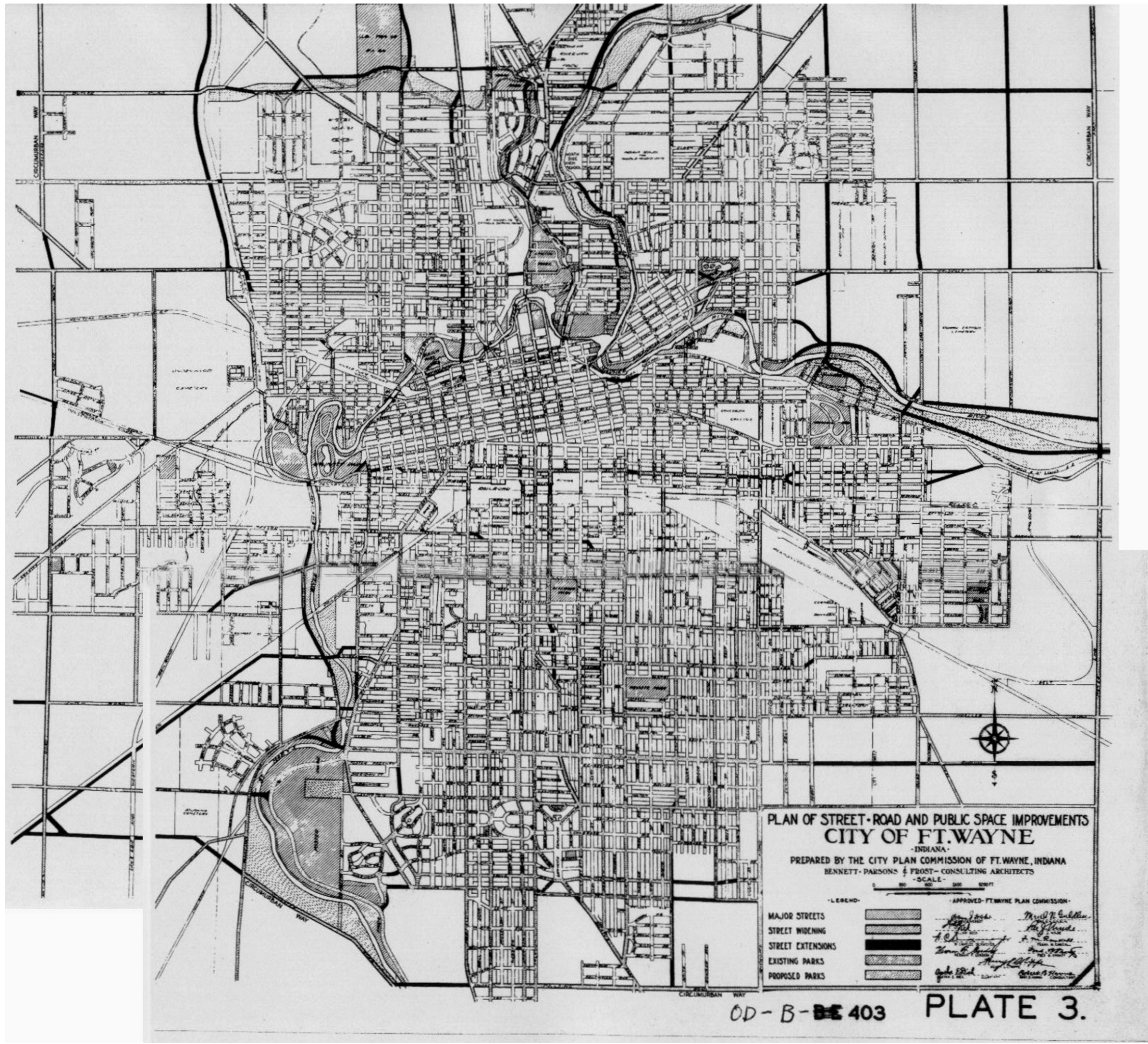
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Map of the  
Park and Boulevard System  
City of Fort Wayne, Indiana  
George Kessler, 1912

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